

HOTFOOT #21--SIDE A
INTERVIEW WITH STANLEY SIMONS - NOVEMBER 7, 1981

SS According to the good book, that's right.

KF Okay, could you tell me a bit about your parents first of all, who they were where they came from.

SS My father, who's name was Harry Simons was born in Rochester, New York, in I believe in was 1885. His father had come from Poland and he was a tailor, that was about the time that he came over that is, this was about the time that the sewing machine, just after it had been invented, and ready made clothes had begun were beginning to take the place of custom made clothing. He became an expert in the field of ready made clothing when he worked for the top clothing houses of the era. Some of them still around. And, was very successful. My Father's Mother was...

KF Was your grandfather Jewish?

SS Yes he was. My Grandmother was German and she had been born in this country, my Grandfather, my Father's Father had not been born in this country he came from Poland. His Mother had been born in this country, and her family had been in the country for several generations, she too was from Rochester.

KF And, was she Jewish?

SS I really don't know, but I kind of think she was, or if she wasn't she was half Jewish. My Mother, was born in Latvia she came to this country when she was about a year and a half old. Her Mother was German, her mother was a matter of fact was not, her Mother was Swedish, her Father was German, and I'd say she was about a quarter Jewish. Her Mother had a very difficult time coming here, her husband

SS had passed away and she had four, five children that she'd brought over, six children, two of them died on the way over, which made it very difficult for her. And she subsequently went to Chicago and had a very difficult time getting by. I think my Mother met my Father in Chicago. And...

KF And your Mother's name?

SS My Mother's name was Nathanson, that was, that was not her Father's name. Her mother took that name.

KF And, her first name, your Mother's first name?

SS Betty.

KF Betty.

SS They both had pretty big families actually. My uncles were all very successful people, they were all doctors in Chicago, and around there. My Grandmother opened up a hospital actually. But she had a very difficult life, there was know question about that.

SS My brother Art, was born in New York...

KF Wait a minute do you remember, have any idea of the date that your parents got married?

SS It was in 1909, would be my, at one time I did have a wedding of theirs, believe it or not, it's around someplace. I didn't throw it out because I was fascinated to find it. I think it was in 1909. I believe, I have a sister who is the reason I say that, I was born in 1912, and my sister was born in 1909, which I believe would probably place their marriage prior to that. It would probably place it in 1908 in those days one usually didn't get when one was pregnant. Or you lied your way out of it one way or another. So I would say, my sister was probably born in a year after they were married, which was the usual

SS thing that happened in those days, and that would have in order to put her in there at 1909, which would be correct, that would put them in there in 1908. So I would assume that that was the way it went, and I believe they were married in Chicago.

KF What's your sister's name?

SS Leonore.

KF Leonore. Is she still alive?

SS She is still alive, she is not too well I believe, but she is in Tucson.

KF So she was born in 1909, you were born 1912, and Art was born?

SS In 1918.

KF Okay. What was your Father working at when they got married, or as early as you can remember?

SS He was a designer in the clothing field, the men's clothing field. His father had been a designer before him, and he was the only one of the boys, and they had a quite a number of them, who stayed in the same field that his father had been in. He got into the technical aspects of designing and it is a highly technical thing actually. He wrote a fair number of books that were well excepted in the field, they were standard in the field it dealt with proportion and the grading of garments, making different sizes measurements of the human body and that type of thing. In other words, taking a material that was available and as far as measurements go statistical, statistics that were available and making them practical in the application for mass production, which is not as simple as it sounds, like everything else. You want to make garments that people don't want to hold, the retailers have to buy the material and they don't want to hold the material forever, and they don't want to get stuck with it because styles change and yet you have to have enough sizes to please your

SS customers and that isn't easy. It's a very interesting field actually, I was in it for awhile and it is a fascinating field.

KF Did he work for himself or was he employed by somebody?

SS My father almost from the beginning worked for himself. He put out a magazine called the Clothing Trade Journal and several magazines, and they were standard, they were standards in the trade for a rather substantial period of time. He was, his manner like learning.

KF Learning?

SS Yes.

KF Okay.

SS He taught many people the art of designing and he also went out as a consultant to factories, to, particularly in the designing aspect of the thing to show them how you could take the designs that were fashionable and mass produce them, and have them come out so that people would, they would fit in the end. Reap the bass-buckle if you will.

KF Sounds as if he was pretty successful.

SS Financially I don't think he was, he cared more about, he cared more about education, learning books things of that character than he really did about money. I don't think he understood money too well. But he did, he had a probably the finest library in the world on, I've been told this by people that came from other countries, as I got affiliated with the field. They told me that it was the finest library in the world the only one to compare with it had been the Leed's Library that was bombed during World War II when at which everything was destroyed, so that most of them of tailoring are not available at all. This deals

SS with the technical aspects of the thing which most people I'm sure would not understand, probably aren't even interested. But that was what he loved to do.

KF What was he like physically, what did he look like?

SS He was heavy, heavy set, he was about 5' 9 1/2", weighed, he was a good athlete, the reason I say, as a matter of fact the first job he had, now we're going back refreshing my memory. He had been a great football player in Rochester, that was in 1906, I know that because I still have a couple of State Championship medals that these fellows had in those days. And, he was a highly intelligent person, he went to Chicago and he did engage in the designing work but he also taught, or was a coach at one high school I remember is a place called Crain Tech, Crain Technical High School which is still in existence, and another school out there whose name I forget. But he was a football coach out there, and in those days football was not as big as it is today, but on a local basis I would say almost as intent. It's kind of a national game now, and was kind of then.

KF This was a hobby of his, football coaching?

SS Yes. And, he was great on weights and things of that character, he liked to lift things. His weight about this time as I recall it was between 165 to 170 pounds, and I'm talking about him when he was about 19 or 20 and he was in pretty good because he was in all sort of things. I happen to know this because I ran across it and read it. Subsequently, he deteriorated physically because he wasn't involved in exercise and things of that character, got off into strictly the brain aspect of most things and his body as a result deteriorated. But he was a very strong person, my brother was a very strong person, Art, extremely strong. And, I have not been particularly weak in fact, Art and I picked some stuff up around here when he was here. And a couple of fellows were in here, one of the state institutions agents,

they said my God we never saw two people as strong as you two are ever. To pick up stuff like that we thought it was impossible. But Art, was very strong, had a very good body apparently, his heart wasn't that great but I think came from aggravation more than anything else but he was a very strong, very strong person.

KF Okay. What was your Mother like physically?

SS My Mother was a very beautiful woman, had red hair, very white skin, very good looking. Had eyes that were gray green and about 5' 5" weighed about 134 pounds maybe, I'm not talking about her not when she was a girl now, because I didn't know her then. She was a very attractive woman, no question about that, very beautiful woman. I'm not saying that because I was her son or anything like that, she was very beautiful and everybody said that. So I think that that was so, and the pictures of her tell that she was indeed beautiful.

KF Did she work at a job or was she housewife?

SS Never, no she never worked.

KF Never worked. Okay. You would have been six years old when Art was born.

SS I was five and three quarter years old when Art, that's right.

KF Do you remember the day?

SS No, I don't.

KF Okay.

SS I remember the era.

KF Tell me about that.

SS It was at the end of World War I. It was in June I can remember walking with my mother at the time when he was in a baby carriage and since we moved out of New York very shortly thereafter it had to be at that particular time. And,...

KF This is Rochester, New York?

SS No, this is New York City where my Father had moved to because it was basically the center of the clothing trade in New York City, in the United States. It probably still is but it has I would say spread out over the country quite a bit. You have many plants that are elsewhere now. In those days where the clothing that was made was, which in the trade it is called clothing as distinguished from garments. Now that means clothes where there were some tailoring that is involved. Where you have to have people that are tailors work on it with some, in those days, handwork. The quality of the clothes were determined by the amount of handwork that you had put in, and was pretty much set by the union to be honest about it. They had different grades of work depending upon the amount of handwork in it. And, of course the tendency was to eliminate the handwork, but keep the quality. By doing that you would lower the price of the garments and make them available to everybody, which is I would say is probably the goal of almost every industry in the United States. Same thing in the clothing industry. Now there is another part of the industry that is entirely different, which he gravitated to at a later date and that is the garment industry. The garment industry consists primarily of all machine made materials, no handwork and you're talking in those days of work garments, shirts, pajamas. Now that has changed somewhat, and the two have come closer and closer together. So that at this time there is a minimum of handwork and yet a fairly good quality garment that has turned out. And, many of those garments are turned out in the West, in the South, in the Southwest, California and what all now. Those days New York was the center.

KF In those days it was New York City, do you remember the address where you lived then?

SS Well, let's see heresay tells me that I was born on 92nd Street in New York which 20 years later is not a particularly good neighborhood because I worked there in the Dewey Investigations. Dear, I had one those places, election district was right up there. I checked every voter out and we had some pretty bad characters up there, but in those days it wasn't like that. When Art was born, we lived on 205th street which was way up town and those days we were right across the street from a farm, believe it or not. We lived in an apartment house but there was a great farm across the street and I remember that there was an Italian family that had it. And, I was a pretty good friend of a youngster that I hadn't almost thought of from then until now. His name was Nicky, and I used to go over to eat quite a few times when they had spaghetti. And, we never had spaghetti in those days, today spaghetti is, you know. But, in those days the average American family never had, need spaghetti. There was no such thing as pizza or anything like that. No one ever heard of it, but I can remember going over many times. And, they had goats and chickens and a cow and so it was a pretty rural place, and that was right across the street from where we lived. But that was where Art was born.

KF You don't remember the number on the street?

SS No I do not.

KF Or the avenue, which avenue?

SS It was 205th, all I know was that it was 205th street and that was in Manhattan I believe. And that would put it pretty far uptown. Because the river goes across, well it runs all across, of course when you go up to Riverdale you're way uptown. But those things have all changed and some of them become, well let's put it this way. In the 40's see,

SS later on, the 30's and the 40's they became very nice residential areas. Then they deteriorated. So you come whole hog and then some.

KF Okay. Do you remember Art's birthdate?

SS Oh yes, June 28th.

KF June 28th. June 28th, 1918. Was he born at home do you know or in a hospital?

SS I believe he was born in a hospital. It was a very funny thing that happened there. I had an uncle who was in World War I and he was overseas in France at the time. And, I remember, one of the few things I remember the time. When my Mother was pregnant and just before Art was born, she had a believe it or not, a dream, she woke up in the middle night waking my Father screamed. And he asked her what was wrong, she said "your brother was just very badly hurt in France, it sounds stupid, but it's true." And he had been wounded and died, and my brother was born, my Mother always thought it was because of that, with two red like sores on his arm. It was a...

KF Birthmark.

SS Birthmark. And she was convinced that it was from that particular thing. It was one of those unusual things that happens, there are times when that has happened to other people, I know that, and I remember. Because it was a topic of conversation for a few days there. At any rate, that was when he was born. We subsequently moved not too long after that to New Rochelle, and where Art was raised.

KF Okay. Tell me about the house in New Rochelle, was that, is that in New Jersey?

SS That's in New York.

KF New York.

SS It's a actually and particularly in those days was a very beautiful little community on Long Island Sound and it is North of New York, on the way, in fact we lived about a half a block off the Boston Post Road and it was a beautiful and interesting town. And, I think we had nice, a nice youth. Both my brother and myself, the family wasn't wealthy but on the other hand it wasn't poor either. We ate well, there was no question about that we had a exceptionally good table. My Father made a pretty good living, a good one. He didn't have a great amount of money that he ever accumulated, he never did. He got nailed by the depression as most people did in this country and wound up losing everything that he had really, because my Mother became pretty ill. And the result was, we moved to another place. But I'm anticipating, and I should get back.

KF Tell me about the certain, Art was born, he, when he was born he had a sister nine years old, and a brother five years old, a very beautiful mother a moderately successful father who is an expert on clothing design. And you lived, quite soon after he was born, you lived in New Rochelle, now tell me about that period. What the house was like, what the family did together.

SS Alright the house was a one of a row of houses. Obviously, my Father wanted to get out of the city, and into the suburbs. And at that time the place we moved to was, it really was suburban. Many of these places have become metropolitan in nature since. At that point, the area that we lived was not very well developed. And there were woods, even though this was a row of houses, I think that there were if I recall properly twenty or twenty four houses on there. There was a brook that ran across the street that we played in and fell in. Many times my Mother could never, could never get over that, because no matter what we put on, even if it was Sunday, and we had real good clothes on, boom, into the brook. But, there were not too many houses there actually.

KF There can't have been many automobiles either if there was a brook running across the street.

SS No. Well they put in a new street. It's a place called Stevenson Boulevard which I've been back to once or twice since, that's all. And, during the time that we lived there. They covered over the brook. What they did was they built a pipe made of porous clay tile really. And, they constructed, it was quite a thing that they did. It was about 15 feet in diameter and they constructed this whole thing out of this tile, clay tile, baked tile. And it was quite a feat actually. Covered the whole thing up and that was the end of the brook. But, I think one of the reasons for that was because there was alot of land around there and it suddenly became buildable.

KF Yea.

SS And so you have developments and things, in fact I went back there to subsequent date and I must confess now, we used to go, the family used to go into the woods on picnics and things of that character, my Mother used to take us. And we had a maid at that time, the maid and my Mother, and my Sister, and my Brother and myself would go out and we would cook steaks or stuff like that up in the woods. Well, I went back there, there were no more woods, believe me. It was gone. And, the woods, there were lakes up there that we used to go ice skating on, and they disappeared too.

KF And the street was called Stevenson Boulevard.

SS That's right. And the school we went to was a place called the Stevenson School and that's where he went to school. He subsequently, for a year or two after we moved from there went to a school called the Roosevelt School. Which at that time was considered a very progressive type of municipal school. From there he then went to high school. But at that point, the depression came in and the high school he went to was in New York, prior to that I had gone to high school in New Rochelle and so had my Sister. But, we had a nice life there

SS and we lived about a block and a half from the Sound. A place called Echo Bay, which was a part of Long Island Sound and whose estuaries were, this brook actually went downtown down in there. It was a lot of fun. I spent all my time on the water, Art spent a fair amount of time in there. Not as much as I did.

KF Swimming?

SS Swimming, fishing, I went fishing, I would say not less than 300 days a year. That is true, and I always brought home fish too.

KF Oh really?

SS I enjoyed it. Art had a couple of friends down there that he went swimming with, he almost lived on the water for a fair amount of time. And we were sort of active kids, we played alot and played alot of games things that had character. We had a dog, I remember he had a bicycle that wasn't a particularly great one, but he had one. And we did not have a family car. My Father didn't drive and he used to commute into New York.

KF On the train?

SS On the train. He got so, as I recall it telling me, he enjoyed it. It gave him some time to read the paper and so forth. We played the usual types of games and things of that character. Every summer we went, well we went up to Catskill Mountains. There was a place by the name of Woods. It was run by a family, the Wood family, Roy Woods and his wife. And they were on a little lake, and of course I'd love to go fishing there, and I used to take Art up. And we fished there for a long time, and we enjoyed it. It was not a, the ordinary Catskill type of place. It was more remote, and there were none of the fancy trappings that you found even in those days, in the Catskill Resorts. It was a different kind of place, a farm was what it really was, that's what it was, we had alot of fun there.

KF Now what kind of parents were your parents? Were they stern, easy going, they encouraged you to read, they encouraged you at school?

SS Oh, yea. They, they placed a good deal of emphasis on learning, knowledge. So, we always had a very good library at home. And we read alot, we had alot of magazines at home. We subscribed to the Geographic and everything else that you could possibly think of, and we were great readers, I think all of us with the exception of my Sister. But my Brother and myself enjoyed reading, enjoyed learning, enjoyed knowing things, and learning about things, and we had inquisitive minds.

KF Were your parents strict, did you ever get spanked?

SS Not very often. I remember once I ran into some pressure, I got a real shellacing for lieing and I think it made an impression. Decided that lieing was not the way to go, and I would say for all practical purposes I have never lied since. That made a big impression both ways, mentally and physically. I don't know, they were not too terribly strict, we did have a kind of a code that we had to live up to. I went to Jewish Temple in New Rochelle, Art did not.

KF Did you consider yourselves Jewish?

SS I'm a funny kind of a guy, I would say generally not, but, on the other hand, if there is any kind of a stigma attached to it then I say yes.

KF I see.

SS Or in other words if someone would try to put it down, then I would feel that I was battling for something, but in general no. I married for instance a girl who is not Jewish, Art's wife was not Jewish. My children have gone, went to church here at the Presbyterian Church, one of them at St. Paul's. My son I gave him the opportunity of being what he wanted, I just advised him that I never wanted to hear any

SS fancy stuff. And we never had. And I must confess in all the time that we've been married, it's almost 50 years I have never heard my wife ever say anything about the Jews in any way, nor what I stand for I might add. But you asked me did I consider myself a Jew, if someone asks pointedly I'd say yes. If we're dicussing it here, honestly, not a very good one, let's put it that way.

KF What about Art, did he go to Temple?

SS No he did not, no he did not. And I don't think that, Art well he was a good deal like I was except he was perhaps less Jewish, you might could put it that way. I think that so, I don't believe that meant anything to him at all. It never really meant very much to me except that as I say I kind of rose to the bait if someone.

KF Okay. Did your parents, were they practicing Jews?

SS No. No they were not.

KF Do you remember Art ever being spanked?

SS Yea, one time, he hit me on the head with a rock knocked me cold. And he got a spanking for it.

KF How old would he have been?

SS Oh, he was about maybe nine.

KF Why did he do that?

SS He didn't like something, I forget what it was. He wasn't given to that sort of stuff usually but I remembered, you asked me, and so I remembered. But I would say that generally speaking, he was not, he was not whipped. If we did something wrong we were handled in

SS another way, we were deprived of something. And we were reasonably sensitive so that why we were great fighters, both he and I. I mean we took on anybody in the neighborhood.

KF Oh really?

SS That was so.

KF Were you big boys for your age?

SS Oh yea, oh yea. I graduated from high school, I was very young then, and still I weighed 165 pounds and there was no fat on me at all and I was really not afraid of anybody or anything, nor was Art.

KF I wonder where that fearlessness came from?

SS I don't know. I don't know, I still fell the same way I might add, I really, there's very little that scares me. Don't get me wrong if there is, if something had happened I'd try to realize it and avoid it. But, afraid of it, no, and I think that he was the same I think he was pretty much fearless as I recall him in some of the things that we did. He spent a couple of summers with me as a little later on. Not a heck of a lot later on, he was young. We put a couple of summers in out in Idaho and I went with a girl out there and her father owned a ranch outside of Idaho Falls. And we stayed out there and we went back into the hills, and we had, he was a good guy for that. And we worked picking up split peas where they would harvest them, they'd leave dry, in those days today people are a little weaker or maybe they're a smarter, they don't want to hurt their backs. But today you have this stuff in 50 pound bags, in those days it was all 100 pound bags. And he was, I was like 17 which would put him down at around 12, we used to follow these trucks as they went through the fields down the thresher then they would be automatically bagged, and we would pick up the bags because they would be laying on the ground, and throw them up on the truck. We did that at great length and

SS also it was kind of fun. So we had a great, he was a good shot, he was a super shot. I went hunting with him many times and he was a great guy with a gun as far as hitting something was concerned. Uses a shot and I saw him do that later on down in Florida, fascinated me.

KF Let's go back to younger childhood would you say that your parents were very much in love?

SS Oh yes. Oh yes, I would. They did peculiarly enough break up one time for a period of about three months and it was primarily based upon, well you never really know what those things are based upon. But it appeared to be based upon the fact that my Father was attracted to a secretary that he had, I remember that her name was Miss Brooks. Going back a long time now. And, my Mother became infuriated there was something that happened there that, but my Father moved out of the house for a period of, a short period of time. I seems to me it was a couple of months but it may really have only been a couple of weeks. And I remember because I went out to see him, took Art with me as a matter of fact, we went out well it was near Coney Island, in those days Coney Island wasn't a bad place, pretty clear that it no longer is, it wasn't too long before it became pretty bad. But there were also some nice hotels there, he lived in one of them at the time, I can remember going out there.

KF How old would you have been?

SS I would have been maybe 11. That would put Art at around six or so, but that healed, and I think that it wasn't too long before it healed.

KF Do you think that he had an affair with the secretary, or was it just...

SS Well I think that my Mother thought they did, I don't think he did really. He may have well wanted to who knows, she was a very attractive girl as I recall her, and she was young and that sort of thing. But they were however very much in love, I don't think there's

SS any question about that because I look back at the things that happened. When my Mother was very sick and she was on several occasions my Father was quite distraught. And when my Father died I went out to California to get my Mother and bring her back here. She was really distraught, it really knocked her cold. Which peculiarly enough the same thing pretty much happened to my Brother, or I thought it did. At any rate that's the way it appeared to me. That he was so wound up in his wife that her passing absolutely floored him. He was totally unprepared for it, even though he was with her everyday and could see her deteriorating, that wasn't enough.

KF He said to Merv Stauffer that he didn't, he never knew what death meant until his wife died.

SS That's right, I can believe that. I tried to snap him out of it, I did everything, because I could see what was happening to him. I wanted him to get out of that house, I wanted him to come up here, I wanted to try to get him to go into another army someplace, anything to get out of there. To find another interest, to find another woman, to find anything. I couldn't get him out of there, he just wouldn't do it. But finally, when Ross when this thing opened up over there, that is the time that he finally, and when he told me he was going, and he did. He told me the details of the things going on over there, he wasn't supposed to tell anyone I guess but he told me. He thought someone ought to know and just in case he never came back where he was or what had happened to him. And of course, I wouldn't say anything anyway. But, I was glad really, because it was the only thing I'd ever seen that could get him out of that place. It was like being in a tomb it was ridiculous, he was living with the past, and he was really too active a man to have had that happen to him. So I was happy that that turned up, that Ross offered that to him at the time that trip to Tehran. And, I didn't feel bad about it, I felt good about it, and I'm sure that he did too as far as that goes.

KF Okay. So your parents, and you parents were obviously in that case it was till death us do part, they were married until your Father died.

SS Oh, yes.

KF And Art was the same, one marriage a long time partnership, now I gather it's the same for you, your wife is still alive.

SS That's right.

KF And what about your sister?

SS She was divorced from her husband.

KF Okay.

SS She did live with him a long time, I, she is a highly volatile person, and her husband didn't have, that's unfair way to put it, didn't have all the virtues I suppose that people should have. And people who do not have them, run into a lot of problems. If you do have a certain amount of stick-to-itiveness I think that you avoid the problem. You may not be able to help yourself, and maybe that's the reason that you get into these things, but, I think if you kind of discipline yourself to avoid them. I'm sure that there have been in my life and my Brother's life a thousand times when if I had wanted to grab an excuse I could easily have done it. But, you discipline yourself to, not to do that. And so that's, that's what has happened and no, I love my wife and we have been married a long time. I'm sure my Brother loved his wife, there was no question about that, because of what happened and the way he reacted. There is no other answer that there could be to that. And, I know she loved him, so.

KF But this seems to be, this seems to be in the family, this the tendency for lifetime marriages. I suppose it wasn't all that unusual in those days but still real life time partnerships seem to be so.

SS I think that is so. I think that we look upon the home as an important thing and a marriage as a bastion upon which everything is found in.

KF Okay. How did the two of you feel about your sister, now you had a big sister. That can be quite a volatile relationship sometimes.

SS Yea. My, I don't think my folks knew how to really raise my Sister. My Sister was a very beautiful girl, she really was. Very attractive to men, and this created alot of problems for her. My brother and I like school, particularly me. I wanted to learn things and there was nothing else that could mean as much as that to me. If it was anything else it was a momentary sidetrack and I was on a learning pole again. My Sister was cut of different cloth, and so she got into alot of problems, and cutting school things of that character, that my parents were unable to deal with really. It isn't that she was really a bad girl or anything like that, that isn't the case. It's just that she never really became involved in the things that we were involved in. She was smart enough but learning wasn't her thing. And of course if you don't have that then there's something else that takes it's place, so you get into trouble. Which she did, and we're talking on the family way, not in, not trouble in the police sense. But trouble in the sense that the family wasn't the way it would ordinarily be if we had a person who wasn't like that. Today, you have a million families that are like that. This was a precursive of that type of thing. My Father opened up a book store for her in New York, and again this is a little later on, not tremendously later on but a little later on. this was during the depression, right after the crash. We moved out of New Rochelle and began anticipating something because we haven't gotten that far. When we talk about her, I think of her in my parents endeavoring to give her something that would hold her interest. He opened this book store for her. And, I guess that did hold her interest fairly well. She subsequently married, married really the wrong person in one sense...

END OF SIDE A

SIDE B

SS His stepfather was the owner of an outfit called Helene Curtis Industries. Very well known beauty product manufacturers in the country. His Mother's name was Helene and his name was Curtis, that's how Helene Curtis got it's name. They had built this business up from nothing, like backpacking it in Chicago. And it became a surely a several hundred million dollar concern, it was a big organization, it still is. He subsequently sold out. But, unfortunately, while they were very successful at selling beauty products and raising customers, they weren't that successful in raising a son. He liked to gamble, so he got into alot of trouble, and this was, this in the final analysis was the end of their marriage and in fact one of their boys went to prison. And, I did my utmost to get him out in some sense of the word, not to really get him out, but rather to get him out if he were in a position where he should be let out. I pulled whatever strings I could he eventually did get out. And, I think that he is living a much more model life now in Arizona.

KF How did Art feel about his big sister? Like did he fight her, did he admire her?

SS No, I don't think he was particularly wild about her, I think he felt the same way about her that I did, that she always had a considerable amount of trouble that she was in, usually brought about by herself. It's not that we didn't love her, I do, and would go to her now and help her and do whatever I could do for her and talk to her. But, she was a very difficult person to reason with and Art was a great person for logic, he was a pretty logical sort of a fellow. And, here you have somebody that is running on everything but logic, and you're asking someone who is logical to understand it.

KF Okay. What kind of things would she do to get into trouble, did she misbehave at school?

SS The first thing that she did of course was to cut school. Now you have my brother and myself who just really liked going to school and all of a sudden my parents are faced with someone who doesn't want to go. I think one of the perhaps one of the worst things that happened to her as I look back on it now, was that I was some three years younger than she was, but I passed her in the grade school. They skipped me, the Principal of wherever it was, passed her. Now I won't ever forget when I came into her class she was mortified. Although she really shouldn't have been. But on the other hand I can understand as I look at it now how she would be. And, I subsequently moved out of it, up to the next grade. I think these things bothered her, and I can understand how they might. But she got so she didn't, now this is just at that point a year later she's going to high school. And of course at the same time she is approaching the age of girls when they have changes and there's suddenly a sex drive that's involved with them that they don't have before. She cut alot of school and she was going with people, with girls, that my parents didn't particularly like. And the automobile came into play at that age, and of course she met alot of fellows in high school who came from very wealthy families, because more, New Rochelle was a very wealthy town. And, this lead to believe me, alot of problems.

KF Hanky panky in the automobile.

SS I would say so. I can remember times when they had parties over at the house. My parents, you know, and so a few of these fellows were drunk, and they didn't go for that at all. And my Father wanted no part of that sort of stuff. So it led to some tensions and then of course when my Sister kept cutting school the result was that she quit school, high school. And this presented a problem to the family. Because what would they do with her? And so they had to find something to keep her busy, which was not that easy. And where Art or I never lie my Sister was kind of an expert at it so it created some family problems. But, well I, she worked for a time in some stores in New Rochelle, a dry cleaning store, I remember she had a friend who

SS was up there it was a girl, so she went in there. But even at that I'm not sure that that's the answer to anything either to be honest about it.

KF Was there any music in the home, anybody play instruments?

SS My Mother played the piano.

KF Well?

SS Fairly well. I have absolutely no musical sense, and I think that if anything my Brother had a little less. So I would say that there was very little ability in the, mathematical ability yes, musical ability no.

KF Were you told stories and read stories as children.

SS Oh yes.

KF I don't suppose you would remember what Art's favorite story was when he was real small, favorite fairy tale?

SS No, we had Grimm's and Anderson's fairy tales which was the usual thing at that time. And those were the things that we were read. Now what Art's particular one was, no I could not tell you.

KF Okay. That's a tough question, I realize that. How old would he have been when the depression struck and your Father lost the money?

SS 11. He went, I'll tell you where this would put him, and this goes back to his leaving Stevenson School. Just before the depression, we sold our home on Stevenson Boulevard and my Father bought a home on Disborough Lane which was opposite the place called The Wykagyl Country Club which was a very well known golf course, and it still is. That was in a very nice neighborhood, upper middle class I would say. It's distinguished from just plain middle class where we had been before.

KF Can you spell the name of the street?

SS W y g a g y l.

KF Wygagyl Club.

SS Right. I think we although we pronounce it Wykagyl, maybe it was W y k a g y l. Probably an Indian name or something like that. Sounds like it anyway. It was a very nice house. And my Father had just about doubled what the other house had cost but he put it all into this house and of course he had a mortgage on it. Well the Depression eliminated that, he lost the house. Which means that he lost everything that he had put into the other house. And, at that point we had to move to New York. But, for the about year and half or two years that we lived in Wykagyl, Art went to the Roosevelt school, which was a very short distance away, it was kind of uphill. At that point, since he was in the 7th and 8th grades at Roosevelt, it meant that he would have been 11 or 12 years old which is just about when the depression hit. From, I can remember playing we used to go over and I played rum then, I was going to school at that time, at that particular time in Wisconsin. And, I remember we had alot of even we lived in New Rochelle there were alot of pheasants and things like that that were just about in the back yard there. But the depression came along and it knocked us out of there, and that changed all our lives considerably. Not mine so much because I was going to this little Seventh Day Baptist School in Wisconsin. Art however was changed because rather than going to New Rochell High School, which was a very nice school, he was thrown into a high school in New York, Styvason High School. As far as a high school in New York, a tough place at best. And it was tough then because you were down in, our family at that point I think that the first place they moved, no I'm trying to think we lived in two places in New York City and we lived at 788 Riverside Drive but prior to that we lived at 21 East 10th Street. Which is close to the village. And we lived there, we lived there first, we went from New Rochelle to 21 East 10th Street. Art went to Styvason High School, that was a far cry from going to high

SS school in New Rochelle to going to high school at Styvason High, which was completely urban. And the vast bulk of the people who went there were tough characters, a different person than we ran into in New Rochelle. Probably not quite as rugged as they are there today, but still pretty rugged. And I don't think that Art who had been raised up to that time in New Rochelle was kind of with animals, and going out to the woods fishing, that type of thing. Suddenly found himself in New York City which was a real concrete jungle at the time, it has been written that way, and believe me it was. I don't he enjoyed it at all, he found some I suspect some amusements. He saved stamps he even tried to wholesale a few or retail a few in the philatelic end of it. My Father was a kind of a stamp collector, I've always been a stamp collector ever since I was a kid. And I've always been a coin collector and so to some extent was he. We just got fun out of it. We didn't save them because they were worth anything, we saved it just to be saving something. And, but there really wasn't much for him to do. He went up to my Father's business place there for a little bit, but not very long and it wasn't very long before my Father had a partner who killed himself. Another partner who damn near did, although he never felt that way, I must confess, or I never saw any indications of it. But I think that it was a difficult time for Art and he, when he got of high school when he finally finished. I know he didn't like it, I might add he belonged to the Jr. Naval Reserve at that time. He joined up with that, they used to, they had a boat on the North River where these youngsters went. And I think at time it was called the Iroquois, that was the name of the boat that these kids went in. In the summertime this was a little later on, I remember him going down to Cuba on maneuvers with the Jr. Naval Reserve. Even he forgot about that because later on when he got a pension or something like that, or severance pay or whatever it was, and he checked back and he mentioned that, they said well you get credit for that, so they gave him credit for two more years in the Armed Forces which he thought was really great, and so did I. I thought that was quite a thing, he'd forgotten all about it. He enjoyed doing that sort of thing and of course that from the sidewalks of New York really, he put in a couple of years there that were really kind of rugged.

SS He then went to the University of Missouri. And out of Missouri of course he joined the ROTC it gave him a chance to get back into the kind of almost semi rural existence that we had. Well it was in between that and suburban, for a start in New Rochelle. And of course out there he met Lucille and...

KF Okay. What age would you have been when he went to the University of Missouri? Seems to me it was probably 1937, and he was about 19. Is that about the age to go to the University?

SS No, I think he would have probably have been in '36. And the reason I say that is because he graduated from, now wait a minute it's possible it could possibly be '37. Yea. It probably was probably was.

KF He graduated?

SS Yes because he went the group that he was with that ROTC bunch went from there right to the Pacific, and only the fact that for one reason or another he missed the first of two boats that went, probably would have been the end of him because all those fellows that were on there wound up in the Phillipines on the Island there, and most of them were never heard from again. Some of the fellows that went to school with Art told me that. That alot of the fellows disappeared.

KF Let's go back to his time at the University. I gather that he studied journalism?

SS Yes he did.

KF I wonder why he chose that?

SS Well my Father had this magazine called The Clothing Trade Journal, and I think that he maybe felt that would be an end of my Father's business that he could fit into. My Father also wrote a series, quite a few books on the technical aspects of clothing design and they were in their own way, best sellers really. Although he never capitalized on it

SS because it didn't mean that much to him, he was a funny kind of guy. But, I think that's the reason why Art went there, and I think he felt that that's what he'd like to get into.

KF Was a good writer?

SS Yea. A very direct writer which would be in consance with his character and the way he acted in general.

KF Now about this time his adult personality is beginning to emerge so what kind of a young man was he at the University?

SS Now I am sure that I really know enough about the kind of a man he was there because I didn't see him but once or twice down at the University. And, then when he finished up I never saw him, really much after that. Except for the time when he was out of the Army and that was not really very much time. Now, I know he lived in a rooming house I went down there to see him. He had been ill and broke and my Father asked me to get down, and so I took a bus up to Chicago and went down to see him and talk to him. And I remember that he had some kind of a little fox, a red fox that he had as a pet under his desk and it was wilder than a March hare. Snapped at everything, he enjoyed that type of thing, I thing he was a fair student. I really don't know enough about him in that college period. I do know that I took him to Idaho a few times in the summer. And we went down through Oklahoma and drove around through the Southwest but, that's a little bit before this time.

KF Okay. Well tell me what kind of a young man he was then, we must be talking about 1935, 1936 now.

SS He was a logical fellow, hard working guy, had a good sense of humor. Trying to think of some specific things and there's nothing that I can, people liked him, and he liked people. And in fact, he stayed out there one summer, I'd introduced him to some of these folks he stayed out there worked in one of these ranches one summer,

SS enjoyed it and they enjoyed him, they liked him. And the girl that I was going with, believe it or not, he still corresponded with her to the year he died.

KF Oh really?

SS That's a fact. So must of his friendships were permanent ones, I might add that was long after I corresponded with her. Although she was a very nice girl, and both he both Art and Lucille liked her. And of course, they knew her from my having taken them out there. And she passed away, I might add this year. So...

KF Was there any sign at that point of the personality that became famous, the Bull the hard man.

SS Oh he was Art. He was a tough citizen there was no question about that and of course the Army makes you tough that way. The softness that you might have cannot show, you can't do it, he had some soft sides to him, make no mistake about that. But, I think that he realized that you cannot do it in the Army. You cannot be soft in the Army.

KF What, tell about his soft side then before he went into the Army, now during the 30's was when he was in the Army.

SS Oh, we God I can remember some fishing trips we went on, it was he was alot of fun, he really was and he enjoyed it. And I'd seen him at parties where he was fun, he enjoyed it.

KF Would he make people laugh?

SS Oh, yea. He had a good sense of humor, sure.

KF Now, see Ross says that he very rarely smiled when Ross knew him.

SS You know when Ross knew him, it was after Lucille died for one thing. If was Ross was talking about that time, if he's talking about the enders. And even then other Ross saw him he was always on the military end of the thing. Now it is true I was down in Florida with him and yet he and I talked the same language, there's no question about that. Because we saw things the same way, and we laughed and we had kind of fun. So he wasn't all dried up inside, he wasn't. I think that whatever the Army was involved he was tough, and I think that's because he realized that you had to be that way in it. That it was kind of for keeps thing.

KF But he went for further in that direction, most people do. There must have been something in his character that fitted the Army.

SS It's kind of a stick-to-itiveness I think that had he picked that thing he stuck to those attributes that made for a successful military man.

KF Okay. What year would he have graduated from Missouri?

SS I would think that that would be '41.

KF '41. And he was in the ROTC and he went straight into the war.

SS That's right, December 7th, bing bang bong. And some of those fellows I think the call went out to them before December 7th to go to the Phillipines and that's where he was very fortunate. In that the one way or another they would give them a choice of two way, he went, he took the second boat and that was after the Coreagador bit. And if he had gone before he would have been on there, and that probably would have been the end of him. Or if not at least he never would have gotten into the aspects of guns.

KF Did you say that he met Lucille while he was at Missouri?

SS Yes, he did.

- KF Do you know, tell me what you know about that. Do you anything about how they met, was she a student there?
- SS Yes she was, there is another college in Columbia it is a girl's school and I think that that's where she went to school. Her father was a superintendent of schools in a place called Normandy, which is a suburb of St. Louis. And he had been an educator all his life. I believe his wife was a teacher too. I don't think that his homelife was too good. I don't that they understood each other, they didn't make enough allowances for each other. Oh I liked him, his name was Miller and the people there liked him. But of course he was an old time school teacher and lost his job and it damned near killed him, it did just about killed him. Actually they retired, and he didn't want to be retired, but he was. Lucille was very much in love with Art I guess from the beginning. I never talked to her too much about it.
- KF You saw her then.
- SS Yes I did, I was in, Art was over in the Phillipines and I went to St. Louis when their son was born, I remember the night he was born.
- KF Describe her then, describe Lucille.
- SS Very easy going, soft, extremely honest individual, no coniving, not a coniving bone in her body. A perfectly foil, for his heart's. A very sweet lovable woman. She wasn't able to cope with the youngsters that she had, they were too tough for her. And when he coped with them I think he was maybe too hard on them. I don't know he gave them the military bit, which they get older it's great, but when they're young it's kind of hard on them.
- KF What did Lucille look like at that time?
- SS Very pretty girl. Dark hair, and oval face, brown eyes, nice features. A girl I'd say about 5' 7 1/2" maybe, and a hell of a nice girl. I always liked her, liked her alot.

KF And you said that you felt she was very much in love with him.

SS Oh yes.

KF What was it about him that appealed to her do you imagine?

SS His logical mind.

KF Oh really.

SS Yea. She'd didn't really have one. It wasn't that she was illogical she just didn't realize that that was the way you thought. And so he was a great decision maker. He would make all the decisions for her.

KF Did that in any way parallel your parent's relationship was your father the decision maker in the family?

SS I usually thought he was. It's the story of every man, you know, every man thinks he's the fellow that's driving the train but the truth of the matter is that just ain't so.

KF Okay. But in the case of Art and Lucille it was so.

SS Yes. I never knew her, now I could be wrong here because I probably didn't know her that well. But I never knew her to refuse to do anything that he wanted to have done. Now, I can't say that about my wife, believe me. But that's the truth. She really was an awfully nice woman. Because he was away so long, I think she was a kind of a long suffering woman, honestly. You know you have to have a little bit of the saint in you I think to be able to bear up after that.

KF What was it about her that appealed to him?

SS I think all those very things and the fact that she was so very sweet. Now, I'll tell you my Mother became very ill, she had a stroke and she was pretty much blinded. Lucille lived and took care of her

SS for about seven or eight years. Now she's her daughter-in-law not her daughter. My wife and my Mother didn't get along that well, but Lucille was the kind of a person who would help anybody, anytime, and she was just great and a which is a reason when my Mother passed away and we had alot of things in the family that we had. I as a matter of fact gave them all to Lucille, and my Sister screamed at me. And, but I felt that, I felt Lucille had earned them, let me put it that way. She had, but there was never any question in her mind she never raised the point, she never said this is too difficult for me. Or let someone else do this. Now you don't find too many people like that.

KF No.

SS So she was actually with Art fogging around the world the way he did and being put into all these situations she really was a perfect match for him.

KF To anticipate a bit. How did Art react to when your Mother died?

SS He came here to the funeral. And, that hurt him very deeply. He was quiet, he never showed a great deal of emotion after he had been involved in the Army for a number of years. But, I knew when he was suffering and when he wasn't.

KF How did you know?

SS Because of the look of, the kind of strain on his face. I know even when his wife died, by and large he composed himself, but at the end he kind of fell apart. And, he didn't like having to put a home together, it was a difficult time now. He was deeply affected by my Mother's death. He was very good to my Mother and so was his wife. I had never forgotten the fact that Lucille had done what she had done for my Mother. Which was far that my, a thing I shouldn't say I suppose but far more than my wife did for her. But then I think they had misgivings about each other, wasn't the greatest thing in the

SS world either. Not really out in the open or anything, but I could sense it. But Lucille was cut of different cloth. And it was pretty damn good cloth.

KF Okay. Do you remember what year they got married?

SS Sure they got married out here by Joe Walsh's chair you're sitting in there for a fact.

KF I see.

SS At the Presbyterian Church in Morris Plains.

KF When?

SS Gee my guess would be '41.

KF Before he went away?

SS Or if, I think so, I think so. Maybe it was '42, I must confess I really don't, I really don't know. But I remember, and I remember going over there with them.

KF Tell me a little bit about the wedding?

SS You know I don't think that they had, I'm going back, and I don't think that they had any kind of a real wedding. When I say that, I'm referring to a wedding party and all that stuff, I don't think so. I think they came out here were married and then left. I think it was during the time that he was going to go overseas.

KF I see.

SS Now maybe I'm wrong, you could check it out with my wife who probably would remember. You know I would remember, I would remember that, and I do not remember any kind of a wedding party.

SS And I don't believe that they had the time. They came into town here and went over to Joe Walsh's over to the Mann, so went to the Presbyterian Church here. And I'd gotten so that I knew him pretty well and they were married. And I do not think that there was a real kind of a real dinner because I don't think that they had the time for it.

KF Okay. He went overseas. The one thing from this book the Rave that I want to check with you, described his first battle situation and I would assume, I would assume that this was the first time that he killed a man. I just wanted to ask you that and make sure that's right.

SS Was that the time on the light house? Does it tell them in there how old he was then?

KF Oh no, I marked it and I can't find it.

SS You mean in the book it says...

KF Here we are, he climbed it, he had to knock off a radar site at 2:00 o'clock in the morning he led 15 men up the rear side of a cliff, and he's quoted here as saying "when he reached the top he saw a young Japanese gentleman about to take down his drawers and take a crap, he was about ten feet away." It was too bad, Simons shot him. I guess that would have been the first time he killed a man.

SS I am not, I remember reading that in that book. And I was unable to place that in connection with an incident that he had told me about when they were taking a light house in I'm not sure if it was Manila Bay or not. And the reinvasion of Leyte. There was a place I believe called Homohon Island and he was sent in with one or two other people prior to the invasion. The way this was worded they might have been referring to that, I couldn't really tell although Art's story was not 15 people but only a few people which led me to believe that it was not this particular thing. And it may have been that this was before in

SS which case this would have been the first time. The way he gave it to me was, this fellow was up above him, and he, Art saw him up there, it's only a short distance up and he lobbed a grenade up there. And he blew him up and knocked himself out too. And he got hurt, I think now, I don't know. It was my feeling that I thought it was the first time that he had really ever killed anybody, he said to me that felt kind of bad about it but he said I suddenly realized it was him or me. And, he said I didn't have no choice. So I just lobbed this thing up gently and when it went off because it was that close to me, I too got banged. Although he said, what happened to him I think was that he hurt his back. And it bothered him from then on. But, I read this, I remember reading this. And I wasn't so sure that, I couldn't tell whether they were the same incident. This didn't sound like the same incident. And yet sometimes things are twisted around a little bit.

KF Did he talk to you much about killing?

SS No.

KF Do you think that was one of the things that he suppressed in the Army. One of the things he got...

SS Very possibly. Of course he told me that was a part of what his job was. And he said, he said you know, it isn't like you're out killing innocent people in one sense, it's them or me. So it's eyeball to eyeball and I know that if they don't go, I do. Well I think that's a logical way to put it. If you're in that type of thing, you know some people probably would not want to be in it all. I'm not so sure that he wanted, but having gotten there. He was very badly hurt emotionally when his friend the doctor in the Sixth Army Rangers was killed, he was the only person I believe the only loss in the Cabanatuan Prison Raid. And that had a big effect on Art. He felt very bad about that, because he was very close to this fellow. And I remember he told me that he gave his mother who was her name was Dorothy Canfield Fischer. She was one of the original people in the Book of The Month

SS Club, and a very famous author, it was her son, her only son. And he gave her a pair of glasses that he had secured from a Japanese destroyer I think that Art liked very much and he gave her some other things that he had just as mementos of her son. But he was very hurt by that now, the Cabanatuan Prison Raid of course was after some of this. He told me about a few of the things that went on but not about killing people but about eating pythons and he was a great meat eater and he always love these. He was a great eater. I can remember when we were kids the two of us got together sometimes it was hard for my Father to be able to keep up with us. We were great trenchermen, and he was a great meat eater, and here he was out in these crazy jungle places with no meat. And he told me he said it drove me nuts, he said I had to get something to eat so he said he caught this python, a 30 or 40 foot one, he said and we skinned him. And he said as far as I was concerned it was chicken, he said some of the guys wouldn't go even close to it. But he said as far as I was concerned it was just great.

KF When was that, was that in World War II?

SS Yes. He was telling me about some of these, he told me that one time they had nothing to do he was behind the lines with a couple of other fellows, they were way behind Japanese lines they were working back there to disrupt the whole communications and everything else, and yet there were only a couple of them. He said, you never believe what can happen, we got into a crap game just for the fun of it, and he said, "you won't believe this Stan but I made 27 passes in a row," and he said "they were legitimate dice". A pass of course is a 7 or 11, it's a win number on dice; he said "and we started out we're playing for a nickel". He said and when we wound up I forget how many million he owed me. It was kind of a fun thing, we were laughing about it. He and I, he like to play cards and of course I did too, and I've always been a pretty good card player and...

KF What game did he like?

SS Oh we played poker, penny ante, I can remember sometimes when we'd have alot of fun playing penny ante poker we'd enjoy that. And we'd stay up almost night long and I've have a couple of fellows over the house and he would have a couple and we were playing up. He had a friend, you know speak about stamp collecting, he had a friend by the name of Eddie Dillon, whose grandfather was the first mayor of the city of the town of New Rochelle and it goes back a long ways. Well this kid's father lived about half way around the block from where we lived on this Wykagyl Terrace Job, and his father was the kind of a guy who would make \$10,000 one week and then nothing for the next 60 weeks right. Well this kid I'll never forget this, because this was a fascinating thing I was a stamp collector, and so in a way was Art. Well this youngster went out and he bought a sheet of each of the Zeppelin stamps. Now the Zeppelin stamps today sell for about \$6,000 a set that's one of each, right. He bought a sheet of each of them, I think there were 60, it's an odd ball shape. I think there were 60 stamps to a sheet of those things, it's an odd number, and today they would be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. Well his father happened to run into some money and he gave it to them. And then about a year later this Eddie Dillon sold them all, and I said to, by that point you couldn't get them anymore. And I said Art, what do he get for these things? And he said you won't believe it but he sold them for 15 percent less than face. So I laughed about it because I've often thought he's the only fellow I ever knew of that bought a sheet of those things, because their worth hundreds of thousands of dollars today. And they're very much desired by all stamp collectors, but I've always remembered that peculiar little thing. But Art had a stamp collection too that he saved and kind of a big collection at that. I think that I still have it someplace.

KF Tell me about when you went to see Lucille when the first boy was born, this would have been Harry, you said you went down to see her and you...

SS The first boy was Bruce.

KF Oh Bruce was the first boy.

SS I went to St. Louis...

KF They were living, they must have got a house or an apartment in St. Louis after they got married.

SS They were living with her father because Art was overseas. It was a miserable snowy night, I remember it in St. Louis, and we went down, and I remember I had dinner with her father at an Italian restaurant. And when Bruce was born he looked like a prune, gees he was all wrinkled up, I'd never seen anybody quite that homely looking to be honest about it, he subsequently turned out to be alright in appearance. But she didn't have too much trouble, I stayed down at the hospital and stayed there for awhile. And I remember she had a friend, there was a friend of her Dad's at that time they rationed meat, meat was a...

END OF TAPE