

**THE WILLIAM BREMAN JEWISH HERITAGE MUSEUM
ESTHER AND HERBERT TAYLOR
JEWISH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF ATLANTA**

MEMOIRIST: ELLIOTT GOLDBERG
INTERVIEWER: SHIRLEY BRICKMAN
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INTERVIEW BEGINS

<Begin Disk 1>

Shirley: I'm interviewing Mr. Elliott Goldberg on April 12, 2007 for the Jewish Oral History Project of Atlanta Cosponsored by the American Jewish Community, the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta, the National Council of Jewish Women, and the William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum. Hello, Mr. Goldberg.

Elliott: Hello, Shirley.

Shirley: Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing us to do this.

Elliott: It's a pleasure. If I can help I'm glad to.

Shirley: May I call you Elliott?

Elliott: Certainly.

Shirley: Where were you born?

Elliott: Atlanta, Georgia.

Shirley: What was the year and the date please?

Elliott: I was born June 28, 1919.

Shirley: In what hospital?

Elliott: At home.

Shirley: At home? Was there any assistance for your sweet mother?

Elliott: Dr. [Julius Edward] Summerfield.

Shirley: Did people just kind of do that all the time?

Elliott: That was the way it was done.

Shirley: And you turned out to be just fine, right?

Elliott: Look at me now.

Shirley: Were there other children Mama had?

Elliott: Yes. I've got five siblings.

Shirley: Who are surviving?

Elliott: No. I only have one surviving. My brother Irving is the only surviving.

Shirley: Let me have the names of your brothers and sisters please.

Elliott: My oldest sister [was] named Julia [Butler]. Then there was Bertha [Cohen] and Eva [Marlin]. My brother who passed away is Harry. Irving is still living and I'm still here.

Shirley: I knew most of the family. A plus. What were your parents' names?

Elliott: My mother's name [was] Sarah [Levitt Goldberg].

Shirley: And your daddy?

Elliott: Joseph [Goldberg].

Shirley: Where were they born, Elliott?

Elliott: My mother was born in Covington [Kentucky]. Papa was born in, oh, my gosh . . .

Shirley: Russia?

Elliott: Born in Russia. Yes. Or Poland.

Shirley: In Poland?

Elliott: [On the] Russia and Poland border. One day it was Poland. One day it was Russia. They kept . . .

Shirley: That happened quite frequently.

Elliott: Quite frequently.

Shirley: You remember the year?

Elliott: No.

Shirley: And Mom's maiden name was?

Elliott: Levitt.

Shirley: Was it a big family where she came from?

Elliott: Yes, pretty good size family.

Shirley: Did a lot of them come here?

Elliott: As far as I know most of them came here.

Shirley: To Atlanta?

Elliott: To Atlanta. Yes.

Shirley: And Daddy's family.

Elliott: Small family. He had two sisters and three brothers.

Shirley: Any come to America?

Elliott: They all came. The brothers came to America and one sister came to America.

Shirley: Who started all this?

Elliott: I think his oldest brother Harry.

Shirley: To whom did he come to in the United States?

Elliott: He came to the United States. He came in through Cuba and settled in San Diego . . . wait a minute El Paso, Texas.

Shirley: Now why Cuba? How did he make that choice?

Elliott: Because at that time, most of the people coming to the states during that era came in through Cuba or South America.

Shirley: Did he go with anyone on that trip?

Elliott: Not that I know of.

Shirley: Do you remember how old he was when he did that?

Elliott: He was in his twenties.

Shirley: From Cuba he came to Texas?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Who was in Texas to accept him and be responsible for him?

Elliott: I think he had a cousin that was living there.

Shirley: Do you remember how far back that was?

Elliott: It was back at least . . .

Shirley: . . . early 1900's or later?

Elliott: Early 1900's.

Shirley: Who followed? When did your daddy come?

Elliott: I think my father came over in 1902, if I'm not mistaken.

Shirley: To Texas or Georgia?

Elliott: No, to here. To Georgia. He came in to New York first. He worked in New York for a while.

Shirley: Who was there to sponsor him?

Elliott: I don't know.

Shirley: Who was in Atlanta so that when he came here he would know someone?

Elliott: That I don't know either. I don't think he had any relatives here.

- Shirley:** How did he make the choice? Do you know?
- Elliott:** Probably friends. Other people were coming here.
- Shirley:** What did Daddy do when he got to the United States?
- Elliott:** First job he had was a tailor.
- Shirley:** In Atlanta?
- Elliott:** No, in New York, as a brassiere fitter.
- Shirley:** That's interesting. What did he know from that?
- Elliott:** Nothing.
- Shirley:** But he learned a lot. That's interesting. He came to Atlanta and got a job here as a tailor?
- Elliott:** No. He came here and went into the grocery business.
- Shirley:** A lot of people did that.
- Elliott:** Opened up a grocery store.
- Shirley:** You remember where the store was?
- Elliott:** The first was on Mangum Street.
- Shirley:** Mangum Street. You want to spell that for me?
- Elliott:** M-A-N-G-U-M.
- Shirley:** What's that close to?
- Elliott:** The stadium¹ is over there now.
- Shirley:** Lots of stores near that area like that?
- Elliott:** Every corner had a grocery store with a Jewish owner. They couldn't read the labels on the cans.
- Shirley:** Who helped him get started here?
- Elliott:** If I'm not mistaken, there was an association here at that time . . .
- Shirley:** . . . Atlanta Savings.
- Elliott:** . . . an old bank that would help these Jewish men that came over.

¹ Originally built as Centennial Olympic Stadium in 1996 to serve as the centerpiece of the 1996 Summer Olympics, Turner Field served as the home ballpark to the Atlanta Braves of Major League Baseball (MLB) from 1997 to 2017. A parking lot for Turner Field now stands on the site of the former Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium. The stadium was built on the site of the cleared Washington-Rawson neighborhood, which had been a wealthy area and home to much of Atlanta's Jewish community. The Braves continued to play at Fulton County Stadium until the end of the 1996 season, when they moved into Turner Field. In 2017 the Braves moved to SunTrust Park 10 miles northwest of downtown Atlanta in Cobb County. Turner Field was acquired by Georgia State University and was transformed into a football stadium in 2017 to serve as the new home of the Georgia State Panthers.

Shirley: Did he run it by himself or was he married?

Elliott: No, he wasn't married yet.

Shirley: Where did he find Mama?

Elliott: I think he met Mom in New York. He never did talk about that very much. Then they came here to Atlanta. He met her again and the romance started.

Shirley: What year did they get married? Do you remember?

Elliott: They got married in 19 . . .

Shirley: . . . you take the oldest child and back up about 20 minutes.

Elliott: Let's see. Julia [Butler] was in her nineties when she passed away.

Shirley: He knew Mama from New York?

Elliott: He had met her in New York. Yes.

Shirley: Was she already a resident in Atlanta, or he brought her here?

Elliott: He didn't bring her here. One of her uncles was here in Atlanta. His name was Jacob Boss.

Shirley: B-O-S-S?

Elliott: Yes. He's one of the first ones over here from my mother's side of the family. He had a grocery store on Central Avenue. He was successful and he started bringing the families over here.

Shirley: And Daddy met Mama. Did she work in the store?

Elliott: Oh yes. Definitely. Absolutely

Shirley: Did they live near the store?

Elliott: On Mangum Street. The store was made out of the front room of the house. e closed that and he opened up a store on Decatur Street. My father went into wholesale grain business. At that time the stockyards was here in Atlanta and the trains used to come on Decatur Street and the stockyards there. They used to come over and buy the feed from my daddy to feed the animals while they was on the boxcars.

Shirley: How did they come up with this? Just using his *seykhl* [Yiddish: *good sense, common sense, judgment*]?

Elliott: I guess he was. But other people were doing it also.

Shirley: That's so nice. That's so great. Mama worked right there at the store?

Elliott: Mama worked right there at the store with him.

Shirley: What did she do?

Elliott: She bossed him around.

Shirley: That was not uncommon. They would sell and she would manage.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: The house was where?

Elliott: On Logan Street.

Shirley: How far was that from the store?

Elliott: About a mile.

Shirley: Daddy had a car?

Elliott: Had a car and we had a horse and wagon. Used to deliver on the horse and wagon.

Shirley: Mama didn't ride on the horse and wagon.

Elliott: Yes, she did, too.

Shirley: She did?

Elliott: She did absolutely. We all did.

Shirley: You remember that?

Elliott: I remember it.

Shirley: Was it fun, or like "I had to go to work."

Elliott: I had fun because all I did was play.

Shirley: How old were you?

Elliott: I was about three, four, five years old.

Shirley: That's a ride on the wagon. That's fun.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: Then you had to go to school.

Elliott: I started school.

Shirley: Tell me about the first house you remember living in.

Elliott: The first house I remember living in was on Logan Street.

Shirley: At what address?

Elliott: 138. When they changed the numbering of the streets it become 306.

Shirley: That's the same thing.

Elliott: Yes, 306.

Shirley: Why'd they change the numbers?

Elliott: The city did that. The postal service did.

Shirley: Adding more houses? Or was it the same all the time?

Elliott: The same. They didn't add more houses. they just renumbered the neighborhood.

Shirley: Tell me about your house that you remember, the first one.

Elliott: The first house was a two-bedroom house with a living room, dining room, a big kitchen, and a bathroom on the back porch.

Shirley: Inside or outside?

Elliott: An open back porch. The bathroom was out there.

Shirley: Convenient.

Elliott: It was six kids that lived there. You can imagine.

Shirley: Where were you in the ranking? Were you the youngest?

Elliott: I was the baby.

Shirley: It was a porch facility? You remember that?

Elliott: A back porch. Sure.

Shirley: Cold.

Elliott: Very cold. Tell me about it. You had to have a gas heater in the bathroom to keep warm. After a few years we closed in that back porch and made a bedroom out of it.

Shirley: What happened to the rest room?

Elliott: It stayed in the same place. We closed that up, too. It wasn't exactly open, I mean, but it was closed.

Shirley: And you added a bedroom.

Elliott: We added a bedroom.

Shirley: Where did you go to elementary school?

Elliott: Fair Street School.

Shirley: Do you remember anything about that school?

Elliott: Oh, yes.

Shirley: Any teachers who you really were fond of?

Elliott: I knew Mrs. Geffen² taught there.

Shirley: Which Mrs. Geffen?

² Lottie Geffen Simon (1900-1991) was a school teacher and the daughter of Rabbi Tobias Geffen (1870-1970), an Orthodox rabbi and leader of Shearith Israel in Atlanta from 1910-1970. She married Abraham Simon 1930.

Elliott: Helen Geffen. Not Helen it was . . .

Shirley: Related to Rabbi [Tobias] Geffen?³

Elliott: His daughter.

Shirley: She taught at Fair Street School?

Elliott: She taught at Fair Street School. One of my teachers was named Miss. Blackmon. I remember a Mrs. Blackshear. I remember when I came home from the army still in uniform and I was walking on Broad Street, somewhere over there, an old lady across the street said, “Young man, come over here.” I looked at her. I said, “Who me?” “Yes, nobody there but you. I told you come over here.” I walked over there. She looked at me. She says, “Elliott Goldberg.”

Shirley: Oh, my goodness.

Elliott: It was my kindergarten teacher.

Shirley: I love that. That’s great. Evidently you looked pretty good.

Elliott: She says, “You’ve got to come to school and talk to my class.” We set up a date. I went over to Fair Street School a couple of days later. They had an assembly with the whole school. I talked to them about the Army and about my experience. It’s a joke I used to tell them all the time. I was the only American soldier that was decorated by the German army. That got them all excited. They want to know how. What did you do? “I shot at 16 Germans and I missed them.”

Shirley: Elliott, did you know how to shoot?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Pretty good?

Elliott: I was a sharp shooter.

Shirley: I’m going to get to the army part. I’m going back.

Elliott: I had to tell this story because . . .

Shirley: I love that.

Elliott: . . . talking about going back to school.

Shirley: You remembered some of the teachers and evidently they remembered you. How far

³ Rabbi Tobias Geffen (1870-1970) was an Orthodox rabbi and leader of Shearith Israel in Atlanta from 1910-1970. He is widely known for his 1935 decision that certified Coca-Cola as kosher. He also organized the first Hebrew school in Atlanta, and standardized regulation of kosher supervision in the Atlanta area. Rabbi Geffen and his wife Sara had four sons and four daughters: Joel, Samuel, Louis, Abraham, Lottie, Bessie, Annette, and Helen.

did you have to walk from your house to get to school from your house?

Elliott: Five minutes.

Shirley: Pretty good. Who lived near you and around you?

Elliott: Let's see. The Siegels lived on Hill Street.

Shirley: Which Siegels?

Elliott: Frances Siegel [Shulmister] and her two sisters. What's their names? I forgot.

Shirley: Ms. Siegel and Ms. Siegel . . . until you remember.

Elliott: Yes. He worked for the railroad. They were on the corner of Woodland Avenue and Hill Street. Across [from] where he lived was a grocery store. Believe it or not it was operated by a non-Jew. Next door there was our barbershop where we went to get our hair cut. On our street the Levetans lived.

Shirley: The Levetans?

Elliott: Yes. Joe and Rebecca [Boss] Levetan lived on Logan Street with Mrs. Boss who was a sister-in-law to J. [Joseph] Boss who brought them here.

Shirley: To Atlanta?

Elliott: To Atlanta. Also on the street there was a Nerenbaum family that lived down from us.

Shirley: Ona [Levin] Nerenbaum's family?

Elliott: One of the cousins of my father.

Shirley: You have a very big family . . . a huge family.

Elliott: Not much of them left though.

Shirley: A white neighborhood or a black neighborhood?

Elliott: Mixed. We had the blacks live down the back alleys. The whites lived up on the main street.

Shirley: Trade with Daddy or with the man down the street?

Elliott: My father had a pretty good trade.

Shirley: Cash or charge?

Elliott: Both. You know the old tablet. Write down what you got.

Shirley: I remember it well.

Elliott: In Yiddish and English.

Shirley: That's right. And the basket with all the little bells in it.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: Who did the ordering? Mama or Daddy?

Elliott: Both of them.

Shirley: Who went to the farmer's market to pick up? They had to pick up the produce.

Elliott: They didn't have a farmers' market that I know of.

Shirley: How did you get your stuff?

Elliott: I think peddlers came by and peddled them off their trucks or wagons.

Shirley: And meat?

Elliott: Came from the warehouse, the meat warehouse. The salesman come by, take an order, and they'd deliver it.

Shirley: Atlanta Provision or Star Provision?

Elliott: Star Provision's Swift & Company.

Shirley: Swift. Right. The bread they deliver on the . . . ?

Elliott: . . . Bamby Bread, of course.

Shirley: Bamby Bread.

Elliott: Srochi.

Shirley: Alan Srochi's father. That's right.

Elliott: Abe Srochi.

Shirley: There was one other one they had. Not Sunshine but Bamby and . . .

Elliott: . . . Colonial . . . Southern Bread.

Shirley: Southern Bread.

Elliott: That's one of the oldest ones.

Shirley: Remember how much anything was back then? Package of biscuits maybe.

Elliott: Sold bread for a dime.

Shirley: What about milk? Cigarettes?

Elliott: You could only buy milk back then in quart bottles. That sold for about 10 or 15 cents a bottle.

Shirley: Remember how much?

Elliott: Cigarettes were 10 to 15 cents a carton.

Shirley: How about milk? It was cheap.

Elliott: Eggs, 15 cents a dozen.

Shirley: Lemons, three for a dime.

Elliott: Just about.

Shirley: Did you used to work in the store?

Elliott: I was too little. I used to play in the store.

Shirley: But you got bigger. Did you ever work there?

Elliott: Not in that store.

Shirley: There was another one that followed that one. You liked elementary school?

Elliott: Very well.

Shirley: All of your sisters and brothers . . .

Elliott: . . . went to Fair Street School.

Shirley: Fair Street. Were any of these brothers and sisters in school when you were in the same elementary school?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: [Did you] walk together?

Elliott: Not necessarily. Sometime yes, sometime no.

Shirley: Did you have a lot of friends?

Elliott: Yes, I had a lot of friends at school.

Shirley: Tell me some of them. Do you remember any Jewish kids?

Elliott: Yes, I remember Naomi Lestern. She was my . . . I'm not going to say this. Cut that off.

Shirley: That's okay. We'll let this one go.

Elliott: Lot of Jewish kids there at Fair Street School in [unintelligible].

Shirley: Stores?

Elliott: A lot of Jews were living in that neighborhood.

Shirley: What was your favorite subject?

Elliott: Recess.

Shirley: Things haven't changed. They allowed you 40 minutes or so to play outside.

Elliott: Forty to forty-five minutes for recess is right.

Shirley: Did you take your lunch?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Mama make it for you?

Elliott: Mama made the lunch. Sometimes I would take a salami sandwich. Back in those days we had the cloakrooms and the . . .

Shirley: . . . put your coats and everything else in the cloakroom.

Elliott: . . . you put your lunch up on the shelf.

Shirley: Right.

Elliott: They turned the heat on. Along about 9 or 10 o'clock you start smelling the salami. Then it was time for lunch.

Shirley: Now what about *Pesach*?⁴ Take *matzo*?⁵

Elliott: Take *matzo*, hard-boiled egg.

Shirley: Little cheese? Tuna? That's about it. Any Jewish kids in your class except for that one young lady?

Elliott: Yes. I don't remember any of them though.

Shirley: Salami was a familiar odor. That's great. You have any special book that you loved more than any other that you read when you were a kid?

Elliott: Not really.

Shirley: Did you go to the library?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Where was it?

Elliott: The library was on Capitol Avenue.

Shirley: You ever get down to Carnegie, or was that too far?

Elliott: Carnegie Library is where it was.

Shirley: Carnegie was on Capitol Avenue first then it moved downtown near the . . .

Elliott: . . . no they had several branches.

Shirley: Did you enjoy reading?

Elliott: Yes. I did. During the summer time I used to read the required number of books. We

⁴ *Pesach* means 'Passover' in Hebrew and commemorates the anniversary of Israel's liberation from slavery in Egypt. The holiday lasts for eight days. Unleavened bread, *matzot*, is eaten in memory of the unleavened bread prepared by the Israelite during their hasty flight from Egypt, when they had not time to wait for the dough to rise. On the first two nights of Passover, the *seder*, the central event of the holiday is celebrated. The *seder* service is one of the most colorful and joyous occasions in Jewish life. In addition to eating *matzah* during the *seder*, Jews are prohibited from eating leavened bread during the entire week of Passover. In addition, Jews are also supposed to avoid foods made with wheat, barley, rye, spelt or oats unless those foods are labeled 'kosher for Passover.' Jews traditionally have separate dishes for Passover.

⁵ *Matzo*, *matza* or *matzah* is unleavened bread traditionally eaten by Jews during Passover.

were required to read 10 books during the summer. I read the 10 books . . . at least glanced through them.

Shirley: Glance through? What was your favorite sport?

Elliott: Baseball.

Shirley: Get to hang out doing that any time? Was there any place to play that?

Elliott: Yes, we played in the street.

Shirley: That's right.

Elliott: Played football in the street. Played around. We played football without uniforms.

Shirley: That's right. After Fair Street School where'd you go to Junior High?

Elliott: Hoke Smith Junior High on Hill Street.

Shirley: Then high school.

Elliott: Commercial High.⁶ On Pryor Street.

Shirley: Did you like school?

Elliott: Yes, but I didn't study. That was my problem.

Shirley: But you were a good student anyway.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: How did I know that?

Elliott: I found out you could do your homework and know what the questions are going to be when the teacher asked you the next day. I started doing my homework. I started passing. My last couple years I made all A's.

Shirley: Which means you could have done it.

Elliott: I could have done it the whole time if I had done my homework.

Shirley: What I'm interested in [is] did you share any of this with your parents or they didn't know what you were doing?

Elliott: My mother knew what I was doing pretty well.

Shirley: She ever say, "What do you have for homework?"

Elliott: Every day.

Shirley: She ever check it?

Elliott: She couldn't read English. That's where I had the advantage over her.

⁶ Commercial High School began as a department of Girls' High School in 1889 for girls who wanted to learn business skills. They taught bookkeeping, typing, math and history. It expanded to a four-story brick building on Pryor Street, and in 1910 became Atlanta's first coed high school. It closed in June 1947

Shirley: When you were out of school for a Jewish holiday who wrote the note to excuse you from going to school or did you have to have a note?

Elliott: No, we didn't have to have a note because so many Jewish kids were out of *shul*—or out of our school rather. We didn't need a note.

Shirley: If a child didn't show up then did you get a phone call at home? You couldn't just stay out.

Elliott: Oh, during the week . . . if there was no reason to be out. If you're not at school you got a call at home.

Shirley: They used to have truant officers who used to check then, when you weren't in school.

Elliott: I don't know if they did or not. If you're out too much I guess they do.

Shirley: Mama and Daddy worked in the store and that was the first business and you lived close by. Then you moved to?

Elliott: Lived on Logan Street.

Shirley: How long were you there? Until what age?

Elliott: On Logan Street, I was there until the house caught fire and the back end burned down. We moved out while they rebuilt the house. We finally moved from there to Washington Terrace when I was 17 or 18 years old.

Shirley: That's a big deal already.

Elliott: Big deal in an apartment.

Shirley: Who was in the house with you at that point? You were the baby.

Elliott: I was the baby. All of us.

Shirley: All the kids? Nobody married yet?

Elliott: Junior was married.

Shirley: Do you remember that houses at Washington Terrace?

Elliott: It was an apartment.

Shirley: Do you remember that?

Elliott: Oh, very large nice apartment.

Shirley: Who lived around you then?

Elliott: Let's see. In the building we were in the Levys lived in the building.

Shirley: Which Levys?

Elliott: Ted Levy and his family. The Schoenbergs, Barney Schoenberg.

Shirley: Barney.

Elliott: Oh, it was . . . they lived across the hall. I can't even remember the name.

Shirley: You were what, a senior in high school? Junior or senior at that point?

Elliott: No, I was already finished with high school.

Shirley: When they moved over to Washington Terrace?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Then what did you do?

Elliott: I went to work with Sidney Cavalier, now—Sidney Goldstein, then . . . the Primrose Laundry.⁷

Shirley: That's right.

Elliott: Bookkeeper.

Shirley: Sally Kaplan's⁸ father.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: As a bookkeeper?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Where'd you get that education?

Elliott: Commercial High School.

Shirley: That's right. Because that was the school where trained . . . Right away got that job?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Did you like it?

Elliott: Yes. I thought it was all right. It's the first real paying job I ever had.

Shirley: How'd you get to work?

Elliott: Walked.

Shirley: How far was it?

Elliott: The plant was on Edgewood Avenue. I lived on Logan Street. I guess it was probably a mile, mile and a half.

Shirley: Walked there and walked back? Any place to have lunch or you took your lunch?

Elliott: I took my lunch. Sometimes it was a little café around there we'd go grab a bite at that little cafe.

⁷ The business was Primrose Dry Cleaning, formerly Primrose Cleaners.

⁸ Sally Ann Cavalier is the daughter of Sidney Cavalier. She married Philip Kaplan in 1957.

Shirley: Who else worked for him other than you?

Elliott: At that particular time?

Shirley: Yes.

Elliott: Oh, I don't remember. Had a lot of other people working but . . . people working in the plant, rather than in the dry cleaning plant and the laundry plant.

Shirley: From there what did you do? How long did you stay with that company?

Elliott: I stayed with the Sidney for couple of years. I didn't have to work on Saturdays so on Saturday I went to work for the Tenenbaums in their grocery store.

Shirley: Alvin's parents? Ray Tenenbaum or a different one?

Elliott: That crowd. Paul Tenenbaum and Mary Tenenbaum.

Shirley: Where was their place? Not Jonesboro? I'm trying . . .

Elliott: At that time they had a store on Northside Drive.

Shirley: Before the expressway?

Elliott: No. Way before . . .

Shirley: What'd you do there?

Elliott: I was waiting on customers.

Shirley: Customers? Sounds like it was a big enough store to where they needed extra personnel.

Elliott: Yes, I worked there. Herbert Besser worked there. Sidney Silver worked there. There was one other Jewish boy that worked there.

Shirley: That's a big store.

Elliott: It was one of the first what they call . . . one of the first supermarkets.

Shirley: Right.

Elliott: In Atlanta.

Shirley: You serve yourself.

Elliott: Somebody did, yes.

Shirley: Because the old grocery stores the owner usually walked around with the client.

Elliott: We did too, but see a lot of them would go pick up and they bring it to a long checkout counter where Mrs. Tenenbaum would check them out.

Shirley: Did Mrs. Tenenbaum have an adding machine at that point or she still wrote it on the side of the paper bag?

Elliott: Paper bag.

Shirley: Bet she was quick in her math too?

Elliott: Absolutely. That's when 5 and 5 equal 15.

Shirley: Sometimes. Sometimes you got paid and sometimes you didn't. Any charges still going on there?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: How did people pay?

Elliott: The customers kept a little tablet with them. They'd come in to buy their groceries. They'd take the tablet out of their pocket. They gave it to Paul or either gave it to Mary and they'd run and get their order. They'd add it up and they'd say put the date on there what they bought and put the amount down. Then they pay \$5 or \$10 on the balance and they take \$5 off of that and say this is what you owe. That's the way they did it.

Shirley: That was on their tablet. How did you keep a record of what they owed? You had the . . .

Elliott: No, they had their own. We didn't have a tablet. They brought their own book in.

Shirley: How did you know what they owed?

Elliott: It was in their book. They'd give you the book when they come in.

Shirley: How did you keep up with what they . . . if they don't bring their book?

Elliott: They wouldn't get anything on credit unless they brought their book.

Shirley: I see. Interesting. No modern equipment or anything? No adding machine? No computer?

Elliott: They finally got an adding machine.

Shirley: One of these. That's great. You already had experience about the grocery store. I mean you had already come in there well prepared.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: How old were you at that point? Nineteen?

Elliott: No. I'd just gotten out of high school.

Shirley: 18 years old?

Elliott: About 18 . . . like that.

Shirley: Sounds like it was pretty close to . . . was the war already started?

Elliott: No.

Shirley: After that business did you move someplace else or stay with them until you went into the service?

Elliott: No. I worked on Saturday. Also at one time for Simon Parks.

Shirley: What did he do?

Elliott: He had a meat market on Decatur Street.

Shirley: Now some Saturdays you were working for Tenenbaums?

Elliott: That was before I went to work for the Tenenbaums. I worked for Simon Parks first.

Shirley: Now where was his store?

Elliott: On Decatur Street.

Shirley: Yes. You got a nice resume now. What year were you born?

Elliott: 1919.

Shirley: Who'd you hang around with when you weren't working and where?

Elliott: I went [to the] [Jewish Educational] Alliance.⁹

Shirley: Jewish Education[al] Alliance on Capitol Avenue?

Elliott: Save that. We'll we come to that. I'll tell you why.

Shirley: Okay.

Elliott: Levitts had a fish store on Capitol Avenue.

Shirley: Now that's—first name? Betty Levitt?

Elliott: Yes. Abe Levitt.¹⁰

Shirley: Betty Levitt's parents.

Elliott: Right before then, a truck from the Atlantic Ice and Coal Company crashed into the front end of our store on Decatur Street. The building caved in.

Shirley: Where were you when that happened?

Elliott: I was at home. That happened over the weekend. That put us out of business because

⁹ The Jewish Educational Alliance operated from 1910 to 1948 on the site where the Atlanta- Fulton County Stadium was located. The JEA was once the hub of Jewish life in Atlanta. Families congregated there for social, educational, sports and cultural programs. The JEA ran camps and held classes to help some new residents learn to read and write English. For newcomers, it became a refuge, with programs to help them acclimate to a new home. The JEA stayed at that site until the late 1940's, when it evolved into the Atlanta Jewish Community Center and moved to Peachtree Street. It stayed there until 1998, when the building was sold and the center moved to Dunwoody. In 2000, it was renamed the 'Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta.'

¹⁰ Abe Levitt (1884 – 1958) was born in Lithuania and came to the United States in 1905. He was a businessman and philanthropist who was active in the Jewish community in Atlanta, Georgia. He was pioneer in the frozen fish industry and established Capitol Fish Company in Atlanta in 1906. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Jewish Home for the Aged and was active in several Jewish charities and organizations. He and his wife, Anne, had three children: Julius, Jacob and Pauline.

at that time, there was no insurance. My father went to work with his brother-in-law, Abe Levitt, in the fish business.

Shirley: So that was his brother-in-law? That was Capitol Fish.

Elliott: Capitol Fish kept growing. My father [unintelligible] had a heart attack and he had to get out of the business. He wasn't able to work anymore. My mother took over the fish market on Capitol Avenue. We ran it. All the kids and my mother. We ran the fish market. My father was sick. [We] had to take care of him.

Shirley: I remember my father taking me to Capitol Fish. It was an adventure. He could buy fish for the store. I learned how to hold my breath for a long time. But then you get kind of used to it. You worked there, too?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: What was your job?

Elliott: Waiting on customers, cleaning up, whatever had to be done.

Shirley: Did you know one fish from the other?

Elliott: I learned it.

Shirley: What's the biggest seller?

Elliott: Croakers.¹¹ Croakers and mullets. To the non-Jewish trade. The biggest seller to the Jewish trade was trout.

Shirley: Right.

Elliott: I used to be able to tell you what each customer ordered by heart just about every week. I got a pound-and-a-half trout, two pound of trout, a piece of fat fish, a sliced wrapper.

Shirley: That's PR [public relations] right there, to know how to do that. That's personal.

Elliott: We'd remember what the order was practically every week.

Shirley: That's a compliment to the customer. They'll come back. Wrap it up in that brown paper.

Elliott: Not too long ago I still could tell you . . . Oh, I remember them. She used to order so much of that fish, so much of trout.

Shirley: Now when *Yontif*¹² came around, when the holiday came around for *Rosh Ha-Shanah*¹³ and they need *gefilte* fish¹⁴ was that the place to come?

¹¹ The Sciaenidae are a family of fish commonly called drums or croakers in reference to the repetitive throbbing or drumming sounds they make. The family consists of about 275 species.

Elliott: That was the place to come.

Shirley: It went beyond the trout.

Elliott: I would say we had the only kosher¹⁵ fish market in Atlanta.

Shirley: A kosher fish market.

Elliott: You call it kosher. The oysters were in the last bin. The oysters and shrimp were in the last bin.¹⁶

Shirley: That makes it okay. I think. All right just . . .

Elliott: We didn't sell catfish.

Shirley: I see. Those clients, would they come on a regular basis? They come in before the holiday?

Elliott: And buy their fish. They could call and give you an order and we'd deliver it.

Shirley: You delivered too?

Elliott: We had a delivery system.

Shirley: Did your mama make her own gefilte fish?

Elliott: Absolutely. The best in town. As far as I was concerned.

Shirley: She could pick it up at Capitol Fish, come home chop it up and take forever and it's out of sight.

Elliott: We got all of our fish . . . we ordered a lot of it direct from Chicago. Whitefish and pike and carp come in direct. The trout and other fish like that we got from Capitol Fish Company.

¹² *Yontif* is the Yiddish word; in Hebrew it is 'yom tov.' It is generic word for Jewish holidays. It includes all but the High Holy Days of *Rosh Ha-Shanah* and *Yom Kippur*.

¹³ Hebrew for 'head of the year,' i.e. New Year festival. The cycle of High Holy Days begins with *Rosh Ha-Shanah*. It introduces the Ten Days of Penitence, when Jews examine their souls and take stock of their actions. On the tenth day is *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. The tradition is that on *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, G-d sits in judgment on humanity. Then the fate of every living creature is inscribed in the Book of Life or Death. These decisions may be revoked by prayer and repentance before the sealing of the books on *Yom Kippur*.

¹⁴ Gefilte fish is an Ashkenazi Jewish dish made from a poached mixture of ground deboned fish, such as carp, whitefish or pike, which is typically eaten as an appetizer. The dish is popular on the Sabbath and holidays such as Passover, although it may be consumed throughout the year.

¹⁵ Kosher or *Kashrut* is the set of Jewish dietary laws. Food that may be consumed according to *halakhah* (Jewish law) is termed 'kosher' in English. Kosher refers to Jewish laws that dictate how food is prepared or served and which kinds of foods or animals can be eaten. Food that is not in accordance with Jewish law is called 'treif.' The word 'kosher' has become English vernacular, a colloquialism meaning proper, legitimate, genuine, fair, or acceptable. Kosher can also be used to describe ritual objects that are made in accordance with Jewish law and are fit for ritual use.

¹⁶ For a fish or seafood to be Kosher, it must have fins and scales. Shellfish does not have those Kosher signs are not Kosher.

Shirley: It's fascinating to me. Do you like fish?

Elliott: Yes. I could eat fish every day.

Shirley: That's great. Now let me back up to see where we were. You're out of school. You've had several jobs already. Is this a good time for the Jewish Educational Alliance? I mean you were a teenager.

Elliott: Yes, it was a good time then. I was a teenager. I hung around the Alliance. We moved on Capitol Avenue when I was . . . we were still on Capitol Avenue when I was about seven years old I think.

Shirley: Was that a good place to hang out or the only place?

Elliott: It was the only place to hang out. I joined the club out . . . the Young Judea¹⁷ Club called the Strausseans. I joined the Strausseans Club.

Shirley: The guys in the club were?

Elliott: Let's see, Sidney Silver, Herbert Besser, Max Alterman, Wolford Bromberg, Sol Ruden, Israel Katz.

Shirley: Which Katz?

Elliott: Israel Katz.¹⁸

Shirley: Israel Katz, the attorney. Yes, I know.

Elliott: Our basketball coach was [Marvin] "Snookie" Sugarman.¹⁹

Shirley: That's Doc [Marvin] Sugarman.

Elliott: Club leader, "Snookie" Sugarman. Yes.

¹⁷ Young Judaea is a peer-led Zionist youth movement founded in 1909. Its programs include youth clubs, conventions, summer camps and Israel programs that provide experiential programming through which Jewish youth and young adults build meaningful relationships with their peers, emphasize social action, and develop a lifelong commitment to Jewish life, the Jewish people, and Israel.

¹⁸ Israel Katz (1920- 2010) was a graduate of Emory Law School [Atlanta, Georgia] and became a well-respected attorney and senior partner at Katz, Paller & Land. He practiced law until he retired at age 70 but continued to operate Seaboard Industries, Inc. until age 87. During the 1960's, he chaired the Democratic Party in Dekalb County, Georgia and was offered a position with the White House team of President Jimmy Carter. He chose to stay in Atlanta, and served the party for many years. Along with his wife, Annette, they were supporters of numerous charities including the Marcus Jewish Community Center. Together they donated a library at the Atlanta Yeshiva and a science lab at the Hebrew Academy. He was a significant contributor to Emory University's medical research efforts, where he received an award for fifty years of lifetime achievement.

¹⁹ Dr. Marvin M. "Snookie" Sugarman (1915 - 2010) was a native of Atlanta, Georgia. He Emory University and graduated from Atlanta Southern Dental College, which later became the Emory University School of Dentistry. He was the founding director of Post-Graduate Periodontics at Emory and taught at the Dental School for 30 years. He held several leadership positions in his field including President of the Georgia Dental Association, the Southern Academy of Periodontology, and the American Academy of Periodontology. In the 1950's he developed surgical instruments for the treatment of periodontal disease that still are in use today. In his younger years he served as a coach at the Jewish Educational Alliance in Atlanta.

Shirley: That's great. Did you enjoy sports?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Sunday you got to play.

Elliott: I played basketball. Played at it, rather.

Shirley: What's your favorite sport?

Elliott: It was basketball because I handled that . . .

Shirley: Then?

Elliott: We played it two, three times a week. Though I had to practice twice a week.

Shirley: That kind of kept everybody together because there was really nowhere else to go.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: You ever go to movies on Sunday?

Elliott: Movies were not open on Sunday.

Shirley: Really?

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: I wonder why? Oh, because that . . . those years . . .

Elliott: Back then it was still blue laws.²⁰

Shirley: Oh, my gosh. When did you get to go?

Elliott: Saturday.

Shirley: How much was the movie?

Elliott: Ten cents. Fifteen cents for adults.

Shirley: You know the names of any of the theaters that were open then?

Elliott: The Cameo,²¹ the Rialto,²² the . . .

Shirley: Was the Loew's [Grand Theatre]²³ there yet?

²⁰ Blue laws are laws designed to restrict or ban some or all Sunday activities for religious reasons, particularly the observance of a day of worship or rest. Blue laws may also restrict shopping or ban the sale of certain items on specific days, most often on Sundays in United States.

²¹ The Cameo Theatre opened in 1925 at 61 Peachtree Street in Atlanta, Georgia. It was built on the site of a drug store and some of the original wall treatments were used in the theater's interior design. The Cameo remained in business through the depression and into the early 1950's. The building was demolished in the early 1970'S when Central City Park, now known as Woodruff Park, was developed.

²² The Rialto Theater was built in 1916 and was the Southeast's largest movie house with 925 seats. It was on Peachtree Street and stayed open during the Great Depression. At one point in its history it boasted the largest electric sign above a marquee south of New York City. More than one Hollywood movie was premiered at the Rialto. In 1962, the original Rialto was torn down and a larger Rialto was erected on the same site and remained open until 1989. Georgia State University renovated it into the Rialto Performing Arts Center in 1996.

Elliott: The Lowe's was there.

Shirley: Lowe's Grand.

Elliott: It wasn't called the Lowe's Grand then. It was called something else. Paramount.

Shirley: Yes. Up the street. Was the Capitol there?

Elliott: The Capitol Theatre.²⁴ The one next door to it where Macy's²⁵ is. About all of them were downtown.

Shirley: What was your favorite film?

Elliott: The cowboy pictures that played on Saturday.

Shirley: See them more than once?

Elliott: Oh, we'd go to the Empire Theatre.²⁶

Shirley: Where was that?

Elliott: On Georgia Avenue.

Shirley: You and what? The guys?

Elliott: Some of the guys and my brother and a couple of guys. A guy lived across the street named Clyde Roberts who was a good friend of mine. We'd have to do our chores around the house and we'd get a dime or 15 cents to go to the show on Saturday.

Shirley: What kind of chores?

Elliott: Bring in wood, chop wood, bring in the coal for the stove and for heat. We had fireplaces in the house.

Shirley: Right. Had to keep it warm. Mama and Daddy worked in the store how many days a week?

Elliott: Every day except Sunday.

Shirley: Yes. Long hours. That's where you got your experience.

Elliott: Yes.

²³ Loew's Grand Theatre, originally DeGive's Grand Opera House, was a movie theater at the corner of Peachtree and Forsyth Streets in downtown Atlanta. It was most famous as the site of the 1939 premiere of *Gone with the Wind*. The Georgia-Pacific Tower was built on the former site of the theater.

²⁴ The Capitol Theatre at 212 Peachtree Street in Atlanta, Georgia opened in 1927 and closed in the late 1940's.

²⁵ This reference is to the Macy's store that was formerly at 200 Peachtree Street in Atlanta, Georgia. Macy's, originally R. H. Macy & Co., is a chain of department stores owned by American multinational corporation Macy's, Inc. As of January 2014, it operates 850 department stores locations in the continental United States, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Guam, with a prominent Herald Square flagship location in New York City

²⁶ The Empire Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia opened in 1928. It closed in the 1950's and was demolished in the mid 1960's when Atlanta Fulton County Stadium was built.

Shirley: Who was at home? You were at school and then when you came home where did you go?

Elliott: We had a maid named Jessie. She raised us.

Shirley: How long did she stay with the family?

Elliott: Years and years.

Shirley: She know how to cook?

Elliott: Very good cook. She taught my mother how to cook. She taught my mother how to cook collard greens, make sweet potato pie, make biscuits, and cornbread.

Shirley: Pecan pie?

Elliott: Not pecan pie.

Shirley: Jessie stayed with you a long time?

Elliott: Long time. Years.

Shirley: That's like a family member.

Elliott: She was just like. Used to tell the joke that I didn't know that my Mama was white until I was *bar mitzvah*.²⁷ The rabbi says, "Will Mr. and Mrs. Goldberg please stand." I saw this white woman stand up. I thought this was my mama over here.

Shirley: Now did Jesse go to the *bar mitzvah*?

Elliott: Yes. She was there.

Shirley: I thought she would. What about your *bar mitzvah* celebration? Who was the rabbi at the *shul*²⁸ then?

Elliott: [Rabbi Harry] Epstein.²⁹

Shirley: You belonged to Ahavath Achim?³⁰

Elliott: Yes.

²⁷ Hebrew for 'son of commandment.' A rite of passage for Jewish boys aged 13 years and one day. At that time, a Jewish boy is considered a responsible adult for most religious purposes. He is now duty bound to keep the commandments, he puts on *tefillin*, and may be counted to the *minyan* quorum for public worship. He celebrates the *bar mitzvah* by being called up to the reading of the *Torah* in the synagogue, usually on the next available Sabbath after his Hebrew birthday.

²⁸ *Shul* is a Yiddish word for synagogue that is derived from a German word meaning "school," and emphasizes the synagogue's role as a place of study.

²⁹ Rabbi Harry Epstein (1903-2003) served as rabbi of Ahavath Achim Synagogue in Atlanta, Georgia from 1928 to 1982, when he became rabbi emeritus. Under Rabbi Harry Epstein, the congregation began to shift to Conservatism, which they joined in 1952.

³⁰ Ahavath Achim was founded in 1887 in a small room on Gilmer Street. In 1920 they moved to a permanent building at the corner of Piedmont and Gilmer Street. The final service in that building was held in 1958 to make way for construction of the Downtown Connector (the concurrent section of Interstate 75 and Interstate 85 through Atlanta). The synagogue moved to its current location on Peachtree Battle Avenue in 1958.

Shirley: Always?

Elliott: I'm a third generation member. My grandfather belonged there and my *bubbe* [Yiddish: grandmother].

Shirley: Now where was the *shul*?

Elliott: We call it Capitol Avenue, call it Washington and Woodward Avenue.

Shirley: Big pre-school.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Shearith Israel³¹ down the street.

Elliott: Down the street on Washington. The Temple's³² on Pryor Street a couple of blocks away.

Shirley: Did you go for any Sunday school? Did they have that then?

Elliott: I went to Sunday school and I went to Hebrew school.

Shirley: Do you know any of the teachings?

Elliott: Every day.

Shirley: Hebrew School every day until *bar mitzvah*?

Elliott: And Sunday school every Sunday.

Shirley: Remember any of the teachers?

Elliott: I had Mr. Ginsberg.

Shirley: Who taught you your *bar mitzvah*?

Elliott: Sam Geffen.³³

Shirley: Sam Geffen. Sunday school every Sunday?

Elliott: Every Sunday.

Shirley: How far was it from your house? Could you walk it or you need to ride?

³¹ Founded in 1904, Shearith Israel began as a congregation that met in the homes of congregants until 1906 when they began using a Methodist church on Hunter Street. After World War II, Rabbi Tobias Geffen moved the congregation to University Drive, where it became the first synagogue in DeKalb County. In the 1960's, they removed the barrier between the men's and women's sections in the sanctuary, and officially became affiliated with the Conservative movement in 2002.

³² The Temple, or 'Hebrew Benevolent Congregation,' is Atlanta's oldest Jewish congregation. The cornerstone was laid on the Temple on Garnett Street in 1875. The dedication was held in 1877 and the Temple was located there until 1902. The Temple's next location on Pryor Street was dedicated in 1902. The Temple's current location in Midtown on Peachtree Street was dedicated in 1931. The main sanctuary is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Reform congregation now totals approximately 1500 families (2017).

³³ Rabbi Samuel Geffen (1907-2002) grew up in Atlanta, the son of Sara and Rabbi Tobias Geffen. He attended Boys' High and Emory University. He was a concert violinist and lawyer before becoming a Rabbi. Then he received two degrees, Rabbi and Master of Hebrew Literature from the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. He was the spiritual leader for over 40 years of the Jewish Center of Forest Hills West in New York.

Elliott: We had a car. Papa would take us in the automobile to Sunday school.

Shirley: But what about Hebrew school? You had to go every day.

Elliott: Walked.

Shirley: Was it held at the *shul* and guys just . . . ?

Elliott: I walked. I walked from Logan Street which was over near Grant Park . . .

Shirley: Right.

Elliott: . . . to *shul*. Every day.

Shirley: How long did it take you?

Elliott: Thirty-five, forty minutes.

Shirley: Just a way of life.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Did you behave?

Elliott: Yes. I behaved. If not I'd suffer the consequences.

Shirley: Which were?

Elliott: Whatever . . . which were?

Shirley: I mean, how's Mama and Daddy going to know what you're doing?

Elliott: They'd get notified. I remember going to grammar school. If I misbehaved the teacher sent a note home.

Shirley: My mother would say, "What did you do?" Could she read it?

Elliott: I'd read it to her. I'd tell her. She'd say, "What kind of punishment did you get?" I'd say . . . if anything she used to . . .

Shirley: . . . With the ruler.

Elliott: With that ruler on your hand, I see. Whatever they give me, my mother gave me twice as much.

Shirley: Was she the disciplinarian?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: A lot of those mothers then kind of ran the show. They really did.

Elliott: Papa didn't interfere too much, but when he did he meant business.

Shirley: That's great. Do you remember just the most meaningful time you had with Daddy or with Mother? Something special? Except that they were good parents probably.

Elliott: I was 16 years old when my father died. We didn't get too much. They just worked too much all the time. There wasn't too much you could do with your parents back in those days really, except at home.

Shirley: If Daddy came . . .

Elliott: Because they never went out. I mean had no time to go out. Never went out for a meal, never went to a restaurant.

Shirley: Where they going to go?

Elliott: There were no restaurants there except the hamburger joint down the street.

Shirley: The cafeteria maybe. Later.

Elliott: There was no cafeterias there then.

Shirley: When Daddy had a few minutes how did he relax? Go to sleep? Read?

Elliott: Read and go to sleep. Sit around the house.

Shirley: And Mama?

Elliott: We'd go for a ride. Get all of us in the automobile and go for a ride around town.

Shirley: That's fun.

Elliott: Ride out to the country which then was Rock Springs Road and Johnson Road. [It] was the country.

Shirley: No houses.

Elliott: No houses. Nothing but the country.

Shirley: What did you do with them as a family, as far as holidays were concerned? Were you at your house or grandma's house?

Elliott: All the holidays were at our house. Even the Passover *seder*³⁴. My mother had all her sisters and all the cousins over to the house for *seder*. She and Jessie would cook up the *seder* meal. Back in those days you didn't have refrigerators. You had the icebox.

Shirley: Yep.

Elliott: How they cooked up everything and had it ready. They make their own *gefilte* fish. They made *matzah* balls³⁵ from scratch. Did all the cooking and . . .

Shirley: Good food, too.

³⁴ Hebrew for 'order.' The ritual family meal eaten at home on the first and second nights of Passover, accompanied by the retelling of the story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt.

³⁵ *Matzah* balls are an Ashkenazi Jewish soup dumpling made from a mixture of matzah meal, eggs, water, and a fat, such as oil, margarine, or chicken fat. Matzah balls are traditionally served in chicken soup. For some they are traditionally served on Passover.

Elliott: You could . . . it was all the good smells to it.

Shirley: What did Jessie and Mama make that was the most delicious that you remembered? That you loved?

Elliott: My mother made the best biscuits on this earth. They were so light you used to have to hold them down to keep them from flying off the plate.

Shirley: That recipe came from Jessie?

Elliott: The original recipe came from Jessie. Yes.

Shirley: Great biscuits.

Elliott: About that thick. I have a little story about the biscuits. I'll tell you.

Shirley: I need to have a recipe. Elliott, what about the holidays? What was your favorite holiday?

Elliott: All of them, because I could stay out of school. At that time we stayed out of school for every one of the holidays, both days of the holidays, *Succot*,³⁶ *Purim*.³⁷ All of them.

Shirley: All the kids did that?

Elliott: All the kids did, and nobody failed. I mean we all still made our grades and all that . . . and had a lot more respect for us then than they do now when we quit staying out of school.

Shirley: You knew who you were.

Elliott: That's right. But they knew we were Jewish.

Shirley: It was a way of life and everybody stuck with it. Tell me a little bit about Rabbi Epstein. What do you remember about him when you were a kid growing up?

Elliott: I always admired him. Always. He was a strict disciplinarian and he didn't take any foolishness. Yet he liked to jolly around with the kids at the Hebrew School. He'd come out on the back lot and play ball with us. Take his coat off and play ball. He's a regular guy. But when it came to learning he was very strict and he had to be strict. When it [was] time to play you played. He didn't take any foolishness off anybody.

³⁶ One of the Harvest Festivals. It is seven days long and comes after the gathering of the yearly harvest. It celebrates G-d's bounty in nature and G-d's protection, symbolized by the fragile booths in which the Israelites dwelt in the wilderness. During *Sukkot* Jews eat and live in such booths which gives the festival its name and character.

³⁷ A Jewish holiday that commemorates the deliverance of the Jewish people in the ancient Persian Empire from destruction in the wake of a plot by Haman, a story recorded in the Biblical book of Esther. According to the Book of Esther, Haman planned to kill all the Jews, but his plans were foiled by Mordecai and his adopted daughter Queen Esther. The day of deliverance became a day of feasting and rejoicing. Some of the customs of *Purim* include drinking wine, wearing masks and costumes, and public celebration.

Shirley: Do you remember his wonderful wife [Reva Epstein]?

Elliott: Oh, she was the greatest. She was the greatest.

S.B. Very pretty lady.

Elliott: If there was ever a queen to be from this country, she would be a queen.

Shirley: She was.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: True *rebbetzin* [Yiddish: "wife of a rabbi]. Very beautiful woman. It's nice memories.

It really is. You've worked in several places. You've moved a few times. There's been a fire, you've added on, you've enclosed. Now what are you going to do? Nineteen—twenty years old, what are you going to do? Where are you at this point? Still working?

Elliott: I was working at Macy's.

Shirley: Oh, that's a new one.

Elliott: But that time [it] was Davison-Paxton.³⁸

Shirley: Now that was a shift.

Elliott: That was the first real job I had.

Shirley: Selling?

Elliott: Selling.

Shirley: In what department?

Elliott: Men's Department.

Shirley: When you went in to apply for the job was it a big deal or not?

Elliott: A big deal.

Shirley: Not or no? Or yes.

Elliott: Very big deal.

Shirley: Because?

Elliott: It was an experience. I mean I was going to get a regular job and I was going to make \$17 a week.

Shirley: Did you have to dress in a coat and a tie?

³⁸ Davison's of Atlanta was a department store chain and an Atlanta shopping institution. Davison's first opened its doors in Atlanta in 1891 and had its origins in the Davison & Douglas Company. In 1901, the store changed its name to Davison-Paxon-Stokes after the retirement of E. Lee Douglas from the business and the appointment of Frederic John Paxon as treasurer. Davison-Paxon-Stokes sold out to R.H. Macy & Co. in 1925. By 1927, R.H. Macy built the Peachtree Street store that still stands today. That same year the company dropped the 'Stokes' to become Davison Paxon Co. Davison's took the Macy's name in 1986.

Elliott: I had to dress in a coat and tie every day and no air conditioning in the store. I think the second year I worked there is when they put air conditioning over the entire store.

Shirley: You were in the Men's Department?

Elliott: In the Men's Department.

Shirley: How long did it take you to learn that? You're already a salesman.

Elliott: I knew what a shirt was . . . the tie. It didn't take long.

Shirley: "May I help you?" That's when the employee went along with the customer and brought things into the . . .

Elliott: Walked around with the customer.

Shirley: . . . dressing room. Now . . .

Elliott: Walked around with the customer.

Shirley: Who was your boss?

Elliott: Fellow by the name of Mr. Rosen. A wonderful boss.

Shirley: Did you know anything about applying? How did you choose Macy's? Where'd that come from? Davison-Paxton's really . . . why'd you do that?

E.G. I applied two, three other places. I went to Macy's. They gave me a job right away.

Shirley: How long did you work there?

Elliott: Two years.

Shirley: Did you enjoy it?

Elliott: Very much. Then I got fired.

Shirley: Why, or is that personal.

Elliott: The personnel manager said I lied about my age. Which I didn't. Because they claimed they didn't . . . people didn't sell . . . they didn't give people jobs selling on the floor until they were 21 years old.

Shirley: And . . .

Elliott: At that time I was 17 or 18, I think, and I was supposed to have a job as a stock boy.

Shirley: Yes.

Elliott: I went to work. Mr. Rosen put me to work there in his department. That's where I was working. She found out about it. She said I lied to her.

Shirley: Oh, my gosh.

Elliott: She let me go.

Shirley: You didn't know anybody else who worked there?

Elliott: At that time

Shirley: Any Jewish fellows?

Elliott: No.

Shirley: That was an experience.

Elliott: I don't remember them. There were a lot of them there I know.

Shirley: That's a shame. Then where did you go?

Elliott: To the army. I volunteered for . . .

Shirley: Where was your beautiful wife at that point? Did you know her yet?

Elliott: I been knowing Sarah since we were kids.

Shirley: How far back? Grade school, high school?

Elliott: They had the bakery on Capitol Avenue. Central Bakery on Capitol Avenue right down the street from my fish market.

Shirley: That was convenient, wasn't it?

Elliott: I used to eat cinnamon rolls all day long so I could go down there and see Sarah and get me a cinnamon roll.

Shirley: Did she know the purpose of those visits?

Elliott: No.

Shirley: I'm sure she did. She's smart. Here comes Elliott again.

Elliott: She wondering about maybe I was crazy or something.

Shirley: That's a lot of cinnamon rolls.

Elliott: I just like cinnamon rolls. That was all.

Shirley: I know. And the salesperson. How old were you then?

Elliott: I was a preteen teenager.

Shirley: That was thinking ahead. All this time what happened to this love affair? Where was Sarah when you were going from . . .

Elliott: Going about her business and I went about mine. I went away to the army.

Shirley: Did you take her out ever?

Elliott: After I came home from the army.

Shirley: Never dated before that? Just, "How you doing?" Never saw her at the Alliance? None of that?

Elliott: I'd see her around, but that was all.

Shirley: Did she know you were interested in her?

Elliott: I didn't tell her.

Shirley: I'll have to interview Sarah. Good cinnamon rolls, nice bakery. You went to the army what year?

Elliott: 1941.

Shirley: Draft or you enlisted?

Elliott: Enlisted.

Shirley: Lot of the boys do that?

Elliott: Yes.

S.B You get approval from Mama and Daddy?

Elliott: They kind of encouraged it a little bit.

Shirley: That's beautiful. After all it is America. Where were you stationed?

Elliott: In Europe.

Shirley: Where?

Elliott: I was in Belgium, France, Germany.

Shirley: That's a lot. In the army?

Elliott: In the army.

Shirley: What was your job description? Stay alive?

Elliott: And keep my men alive.

Shirley: Were you in charge of some men? Tell me what you did.

Elliott: I was a first lieutenant. We supplied the troops up front with the gasoline and food and whatever else they needed.

Shirley: Did you see a lot of action?

Elliott: Much action. More than I wanted to see.

Shirley: You want to tell me a little bit about it, or you want to skip it?

Elliott: I can tell you a little about it.

Shirley: You choose.

Elliott: We liberated a couple of . . .

Shirley: Camps?

Elliott: . . . camps which was . . .

Shirley: Tell me the names.

Elliott: I don't know the name of the camp at that particular time because we weren't allowed to take the maps with us and no names with us. I mean everywhere we went was top secret. We went in this one camp and thousands upon thousands of dead people were just laying . . . I mean just a . . .

Shirley: What country was that in?

Elliott: In Germany.

Shirley: Germany. Were you surprised?

Elliott: I wasn't surprised. I knew some of this was going on but we never knew it was to this extent, it was this bad.

Shirley: What had you been told?

Elliott: We were told that the Germans were killing. I mean fighting the war against wanting to conquer the world. They was fighting against the French and the Americans and the British. We wasn't told there that we was going to liberate the Jews. We [wanted] to go there to conquer Germany.

Shirley: When you came to this camp, it was a shocker.

Elliott: Most horrible thing I ever seen in my life. I used to have nightmares about [it] even [when] I came home.

Shirley: I believe it.

Elliott: I still have nightmares about it.

Shirley: Any of them have the strength to approach you?

Elliott: Some of them did.

Shirley: Speak Yiddish?

Elliott: Spoke Yiddish. I could understand a little of it.

Shirley: You understand all of it?

Elliott: No. A little. Didn't understand too much of it.

Shirley: Do you now? Do you understand Yiddish?

Elliott: Not much.

Shirley: I can't believe it.

Elliott: I understand enough to . . .

Shirley: Fake it out.

Elliott: Know what they're talking about.

Shirley: That is something. Then you liberated another camp. Same?

Elliott: It wasn't as bad as the first one. It was a much smaller camp.

Shirley: That's a traumatic time. Your period in the army took place over how much time? How long were you in the service?

Elliott: Five years.

Shirley: Did any of the other fellows have anything to say about the camps?

Elliott: Oh, yes. The non-Jews, especially. There's another Jewish officer was in that I had with me, and the rest of the crowd [unintelligible] they had two. I had four Jewish men in the entire company.

Shirley: How many in your company?

Elliott: Two hundred and some odd.

Shirley: Four Jewish guys.

Elliott: Four Jews in the entire company.

Shirley: The Christian fellows were probably blown off the map.

Elliott: They absolutely could not believe what they saw. It really put them in a fighting spirit then. They really saw what they were fighting for.

Shirley: What year was that?

Elliott: 1943.

Shirley: That's two more years until the war was over.

Elliott: That was in 1944. Stayed over there a year, a year-and-a-half after that.

Shirley: Was your job description always the same?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Do you remember any of the guys who served with you? Did you keep in touch with any of them after the war?

Elliott: Yes, I kept in touch with my jeep driver after the war for years. I'm still keeping in touch with my sergeant. We correspond every Christmas. I get a Christmas card and New Year's card from him and we write back to him. Incidentally, a sergeant at that time is in the oil business there. He's got oil wells in . . . a multi-millionaire.

Shirley: That's 62 years ago and you keep in touch. That's fabulous.

Elliott: Still keep in touch.

Shirley: Have you seen any of them?

Elliott: Yes, I went to a reunion about 10 years ago. I was there. I met the battalion colonel. His name was Colonel . . . He used to be a mailman before we came into the army. He's in the reserves . . . antisemitic. Oh my God. At times I felt like shooting him.

Shirley: Why was that so obvious to you?

Elliott: His actions, the way he . . .

Shirley: To the four guys or to you?

Elliott: The way he treated me especially.

Shirley: Why?

Elliott: I'd get the dirty jobs. I mean, he'd make me and my men go out . . . he didn't have direct orders over me. My company commander did. But he and the company commander were very close. Me and my men used to go out on patrol more often than—twice as much as—any other company.

Shirley: Did you ever question him about it?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: He said, "These are orders."

Elliott: That's right. You don't question my orders.

Shirley: I understand. You're lucky that's all he said.

Elliott: That's right. Could have court martialed me.

Shirley: Exactly. You made it five years in the service. That's a long time.

Elliott: I had one fight in the service right with the company commander.

Shirley: Why?

Elliott: He called me a "damn Jew."

Shirley: You said?

Elliott: I took him outside.

Shirley: Was that it for him?

Elliott: He became my best friend after that. I showed him what a "damn Jew" could do. I took his bars off and I laid him out.

Shirley: Why'd you take his bars off?

Elliott: I didn't want to hit him while he had his bars on.

Shirley: Sarah married you anyway with this kind of background?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: She's gutsy. A very patient person. Is that the only time you had a . . .

Elliott: The only time.

Shirley: What country do you remember more than any other? Why?

Elliott: Germany.

Shirley: Because?

Elliott: More action in Germany. We had a lot of action in Germany.

Shirley: Remember anything in particular?

Elliott: Yes. The main thing I remember most, a German scout plane was coming up strafing the outfield. We all jumped in our jeeps and started shooting at it.

Shirley: From the jeeps?

Elliott: Our jeeps. We shot it down.

Shirley: Oh, my gosh.

Elliott: I got the canopy off of it and put it on my jeep and made a closed jeep out of it.

Shirley: That's better than enclosing that room.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: Do you remember getting any of their soldiers and arresting them?

Elliott: No.

Shirley: Were you a good shooter?

Elliott: I didn't do too much combat.

Shirley: You're not supposed to be shooting anyway.

Elliott: Against my religion. [I] told you I shot at those 16 Germans and missed them so I wasn't . . .

Shirley: That's on your record.

Elliott: It's on my record so.

Shirley: That was five years out of your life. Anything you remember about serving that you want to share because so many people are interested in this part.

Elliott: I think everybody owes their country something. If [it's] your time to serve in the army I think they should serve. I wouldn't take a million dollars for the experience I had in the army and I wouldn't take a million dollars to go back.

Shirley: Not today.

Elliott: Back in those days you knew who your enemy was. There was order in the army, not like it is today. I mean [what] you were told to do, you did. Today I mean they . . . it's just, I don't know. People just not patriotic or . . .

Shirley: Not the same respect.

Elliott: It's not the same respect for being in the service. That's just it. Back during World War II if you came home from the army you were a hero. Everybody loved you. Every day in the paper they did a little write up about what you were doing in the service. The army would write a little public relations . . .

Shirley: Blurbs . . .

Elliott: Blurbs. Send it back to your local newspaper. They would publish it for them. But they don't get that today. The people could . . . especially the press . . . they could care less what goes on in the army. That's as far as I'm concerned.

Shirley: What did your folks think this time? Were you the only . . .? No, you had brothers.

Elliott: Yes. Irving went, too.

Shirley: Who else served?

Elliott: Irving. My brother Irving.

Shirley: Where was he stationed?

Elliott: New York.

Shirley: Now that's interesting. Doing what?

Elliott: He was in the Air Corps, a photographer.

Shirley: For the entire time?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: He enlisted also?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: And Mama and Daddy were in touch with you?

Elliott: Always.

Shirley: How did you keep in touch? Write a letter?

Elliott: Write a letter. Post office box number.

Shirley: Were you good at that?

Elliott: I'd write letters every week.

Shirley: That's very good. You ever write a letter to Sarah during this time?

Elliott: No.

Shirley: I can't believe this.

Elliott: I wrote my other girls. I didn't date Sarah until I came home from the army.

Shirley: Who were these other girls? I don't want to know names, doesn't matter. Was she ever in your . . . make this good, Elliott. She was in your mind the whole time, though, right?

Elliott: Not really.

Shirley: I'll move on.

Elliott: I'll tell you one thing. To me I thought she was the most beautiful girl I've ever seen.

Shirley: Not was. Is.

Elliott: Still is. She doesn't believe me now.

Shirley: I remember her. Cute. Cute. Cute. Now you're out of the service. Come home to what? To do what? Take it easy? Get a job?

Elliott: Came home to get a job and settle down.

Shirley: What year was it? 1945?

Elliott: 1946.

Shirley: You stayed in after the war was over . . . April 12, 1945?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: In 1946 you're home to do what?

Elliott: Look for a job and go to work.

Shirley: What'd you choose?

Elliott: I was still overseas. I never will forget. I was up front and I get a cablegram from my brother Irving.

Shirley: Yes, from New York.

Elliott: No, he was already home.

Shirley: Yes.

Elliott: All it says, "You want to go in the chicken business?" That's right. That's all it said.

Shirley: You answered, "Cluck, cluck," or what?

Elliott: That's right. When I came home he'd bought a chicken store on Edgewood Avenue. He was selling live chickens. When I came home I went in business with him. We stayed in business together for several years.

Shirley: Fish, chicken, what's the difference? Chicken business.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: That's new for you.

Elliott: That was something. It was new. Live chickens.

Shirley: That's an experience.

Elliott: Used to sell 100 coops of broilers every weekend.

Shirley: I know what you're talking about because we used to have those coops in front of the store with the live chickens. People came over to choose their live chickens. Blow the feathers .

..

Elliott: Use to call them . . .

Shirley: . . . buy one.

Elliott: We had a brand name. We advertised in the papers. We had a brand name for our chickens. It was Double Breasted Fryers, Broilers.

Shirley: Was that left over from somebody's experience in the bra company or something.

Elliott: No, it wasn't. In fact, my brother Irving had already picked the name when I got home. Started calling it "double breasted" because they're big broad breasted chickens.

Shirley: I understand what you're saying. I get the message. Where was the business?

Elliott: On Edgewood Avenue.

Shirley: How'd he choose that?

Elliott: He was looking for something. I guess a business you [can] go in with very little money. The rent was cheap.

Shirley: You had live chickens?

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: And?

Elliott: That's all. Nothing but live . . .

Shirley: Was this to sell to stores?

Elliott: Sell retail only. Then we started selling to stores.

Shirley: Because retail only . . . somebody's got to come over to your place and in a location that's convenient and buy a live chicken . . . fresh chickens.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Now who's going to *shect* [Yiddish: to perform shechita, to butcher according to Jewish law] that chicken? Who's going to clean it and get it ready? The owner?

Elliott: We did.

Shirley: If I come in and place an order with you, you're going to get my chicken ready for me to cook? I don't have to do it myself?

Elliott: If you're non-Jew, we'll cut the head off for you.

Shirley: Now I understand. It's a Jewish person who's going to *shect* that chicken?

Elliott: We took it to the *shochet* [Yiddish: a person officially certified as competent to kill cattle and poultry in the manner prescribed by Jewish law].

Shirley: You did it?

Elliott: We put him . . . we sell the chicken.

Shirley: Right.

Elliott: We put him in the coop, put him in the truck, take him over to Washington Street to Paul.

Shirley: Borstein.³⁹

Elliott: Borstein . . . and he'd *shect* it.

Shirley: Take him back.

Elliott: Edelstein . . . [Reverend Abraham] Edelstein⁴⁰ did it for a while. He did it first.

Shirley: I remember that. That's nice merchandising right there. Very nice.

Elliott: We'd kill the chickens and pluck them and then they deliver to the customer.

Shirley: Pluck them clean. Today they don't pluck them clean.

Elliott: They still didn't then either.

Shirley: When did you decide that we need to move to wholesale? Or move to the stores rather than just . . .

Elliott: Some of the merchants around the neighborhood start coming in buying chickens.

Shirley: More than one at a time.

Elliott: That's right. We started [to] buy half a dozen or dozen chickens and we started going out . . . I started going out calling on the trades.

Shirley: Salesman again. That's great. How long were you in that business?

³⁹ Reverend Paul Borstein (1910 - 2003) was a major participant in Atlanta Jewish orthodox life. In 1991 he was *mashgiach* and *shammash* at Ahavath Achim. Originally from Poland/Lithuania, he came to New York in 1921 and arrived in Atlanta in 1932, where he married. Reverend Borstein was also a *shochet*, *mohel*, and *mashgiach* - the final capacity in which he supervised the installation of kosher kitchens in several major Atlanta hotels. He also participated in the *Hevra Kaddisha*.

⁴⁰ Reverend Abraham Isaac Edestein (? - 1957) was born in Russia and came to Atlanta in his youth. He was affiliated with Shearith Israel Congregation for many years and served as a *shochet* in the Jewish community.

Elliott: About 15 years wasn't it? About 15 years.

Shirley: Such a variety of things, but all in people jobs. Remember you start out doing books for somebody, being an accountant.

Elliott: Simon Cavalier.

Shirley: That a quite a lone business.

Elliott: That was as boring as they come.

Shirley: I figured, because from that you went to people business. Everything you did had to do with people.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: That's true today. I meant to ask you something about the service, the Jewish War Veterans.⁴¹ Hold on just a minute. Before I get to the Jewish War Veterans, I just wonder. I didn't ask you anything about your grandparents. Did they ever share any of their stories about the old country with you?

Elliott: The only grandparent I knew was my mother's mother.

Shirley: Did she live with you all?

Elliott: No, she lived in a room on Capitol Avenue. An upstairs [room] in the Maryland [Apartments].

Shirley: What was her name? *Bubbe*. I knew it. Do you remember her first name?

Elliott: Goldie.

Shirley: Goldie.

Elliott: Frumah Gittel

Shirley: Oh, yes. Frumah. Her name was Frieda.

Elliott: I know it.

Shirley: Frieda. That's close enough.

Shirley: She was Gittel?

Elliott: Yes, Frumah Gittel.

Shirley: That's my name.

Elliott: That's what her name was.

Shirley: Did she ever talk to you about the old country at all? Nothing?

⁴¹ The Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (also referred to as the Jewish War Veterans, or the JWV) is an American Jewish veterans' organization, and the oldest veterans group in the United States. It has an estimated 37,000 members. (2015)

Elliott: If she did I couldn't understand her because she spoke very little English.

Shirley: Did you spend any time with her?

Elliott: Every Sunday. After Sunday school. My father would pick us up and we'd go see *Bubbe*.

Shirley: Whose mother was that?

Elliott: My mother's mother.

Shirley: Your mother's mother and your daddy took [you] by . . .

Elliott: . . . every Sunday we'd go by to see her.

Shirley: That's so sweet. You didn't know what she was saying.

Elliott: He'd leave her a little money.

Shirley: Beautiful. She'd communicate with them and hug you, and that's it.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: You didn't understand anything or a little?

Elliott: [unintelligible]

Shirley: [unintelligible] . . . That's it. Did she ever give you like a little something to eat?

Elliott: We didn't go at dinner time. We just went there during the day. Sometimes . . . no, she actually didn't.

Shirley: How old was she when she passed away?

Elliott: She was in her late 80's.

Shirley: Did she always stay in that little place?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: That was your mother's mother. That's the only grandparent that you remember?

Elliott: I remember. Now her husband's buried in Oakland Cemetery.⁴²

Shirley: Where's the rest of the family? All at Greenwood?⁴³

Elliott: Oakland. No, at Greenwood [Cemetery].

Shirley: Do you remember when you were growing up and maybe this is a little bit later, the

⁴² Oakland Cemetery is the oldest cemetery and one of the largest green spaces, in Atlanta. Many notable Georgians are buried at Oakland including Margaret Mitchell, author of *Gone with the Wind*; Joseph Jacobs, owner of the pharmacy where John Pemberton first sold Coca-Cola as a soft drink; Bobby Jones, the only golfer to win the Grand Slam, the United States Amateur, United States Open, British Amateur and the Open Championship in the same year; as well as former Georgia governors and Atlanta mayors. Oakland is an excellent example of a Victorian-style cemetery and contains numerous monuments and mausoleums that are of great beauty and historical significance.

⁴³ Greenwood Cemetery, opened in 1904, is designed in the Lawn style, with long vistas in all directions. Greenwood has a large Jewish section.

division between the Reform Jews at The Temple and the Conservative Jews at the other *shuls*?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Any particular stories you remember?

Elliott: I know that if you were a Russian Jew or a European Jew you couldn't join The Temple.

Shirley: You were not allowed to join.

Elliott: You weren't allowed to join The Temple. You had to be a German Jew to join The Temple. Come from Germany.

Shirley: Any of those people hang out at the Alliance?

Elliott: Very few of them.

Shirley: Were they in your clubs?

Elliott: None of them. All that was in our clubs was Conservative Jews.

Shirley: Did you ever see any?

Elliott: No, wait a minute. The only one that belonged to The Temple was Norman Weitz's family. They were the only one.

Shirley: Do you remember anything about the youth groups of the females? Any of those clubs?

Elliott: I remember the club Sarah belonged to in the Kadosians. There was another club that . . . a little older than Sarah's group that we used to run around with . . . that group?

Shirley: Did they ever have any dances?

Elliott: They had dances at the Jewish [Educational] Alliance there every Sunday.

Shirley: Not dating. Just show up?

Elliott: Just show up. Most of them dated though. You usually had a date.

Shirley: Did you have to pay to go?

Elliott: Sometimes. It all was according to who was sponsoring the dance that weekend, what club was sponsoring. Usually it was sponsored money raisers.

Shirley: By either the girls' clubs or the guys' clubs?

Elliott: That's right. Sponsor.

Shirley: That was [your] social life.

Elliott: That was our social life.

Shirley: Nobody went to the movies together then?

Elliott: Occasionally.

Shirley: How about a walk in the park?

Elliott: That was dangerous/

Shirley: Where was The Varsity⁴⁴ then?

Elliott: Varsity was on North Avenue, where it is now.

Shirley: Anybody go there?

Elliott: Yes. Used to go there all the time.

Shirley: Who had a car?

Elliott: Norman Weitz.

Shirley: Only one?

Elliott: And Max Salzman.

Shirley: That's it. You had to double or triple date in a car. Couldn't go . . .

Elliott: . . . pile them in there. As many as you could get in.

Shirley: No seat belts, nothing.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: Good. Gas was probably 12 cents.

Elliott: Twelve and a half cents a gallon.

Shirley: That's fabulous. I want to go back to the Jewish War Veterans. Are you still involved in that?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: They meet frequently or once in a while?

Elliott: Meet every month.

Shirley: You go?

Elliott: Yes. We have a breakfast meeting on Sunday morning once a month at the Colonnade Restaurant [Atlanta, Georgia].

Shirley: Very nice.

Elliott: The board meets once a month.

⁴⁴ The Varsity, located on North Avenue in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, is an iconic part of the city's culture. Frank Gordy first opened the restaurant in 1928 after briefly attending Georgia Institute of Technology. Over the years The Varsity has become synonymous with the catchphrase, "What'll ya have?" Originated by frazzled cashiers as a way to keep the lines moving, the greeting caught on with staff and the public and eventually became the restaurant's unofficial slogan. Today, the catchphrase appears on takeout boxes and cups as well as Varsity memorabilia and is the required greeting to all customers. The Varsity has since expanded to several other locations in Georgia.

Shirley: Who else meets with you?

Elliott: You mean people in the post?⁴⁵

Shirley: Yes. Just name a few.

Elliott: We got [Milton] Mickey Light, Stanley Glassman, Abe—Al—Alhadeff.⁴⁶ What's the auctioneer's name?

Shirley: Don't worry about it. Just a few.

Elliott: I'm trying to think of more of them. It's hard when . . . the main thing . . .

Shirley: Elliott, when you get together with these guys they talk about what was or what is?

Elliott: No, we talk about what the work of the post does. We don't talk about our war experiences.

Shirley: What do you do? What does the post do?

Elliott: We run the city-wide Blood Drive at A.A. [Ahavath Achim].

Shirley: Right.

Elliott: About every three months we go out to the Veterans' Hospital and we have a bingo game out there with them. We take them wherever there's a special event in town. We go out there and take a group of them to the event, like we're taking a bunch of them to the circus this month. We're always doing things for them.

Shirley: Is there more Jewish War Veterans . . . is there more than one group or just one group.

Elliott: No, there's another . . . Post 976.

Shirley: Why are there two?

Elliott: Once there were three. At one time, our post had 728 members. They started splitting up to another post and another post. Then they started dying out.

Shirley: A nice social get-together. Very nice. I'm going back to where we were after the service. You came home and you went into the chicken business.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: I'm interested in your social life after that. You're moving right along now. What happened?

Elliott: After that I called the girls that I knew. They were all taken. I couldn't find anybody to date.

⁴⁵ Jewish War Veterans of the United States - Atlanta Post No. 112.

⁴⁶ Abe and Al are the same man. Abe went by the name Al and he just repeated both names twice.

Shirley: Yes, you were lucky. You found Sarah.

Elliott: My mother seen there . . . she was listening, heard me talking on the telephone trying to find a date. My mother was very coy. She says, "I know who you can call." I says, "Who?" She says, "You know the girl."

Shirley: 'Cinnamon roll.'

Elliott: "You know, the girl from the bakery." I says, "Who?" She says, "I saw her grandmother in Rich's.⁴⁷ She was engaged."

Shirley: Uh oh.

Elliott: Her grandmother didn't like the boy she was engaged to,, I reckon. That's what my mother said. My mother said, "Call her for a date." I called her and I took her out.

Shirley: Did she remember you?

Elliott: Sarah? Yes. She knew who I was.

Shirley: "What took you so long?" She's thinking, "I already ran out of cinnamon rolls."

Elliott: No, they were still baking them.

Shirley: Bakery was still open.

Elliott: Bakery was still open.

Shirley: You started dating Sarah?

Elliott: Start dating Sarah.

Shirley: And figured what? This is for me?

Elliott: I never . . . last girl I dated.

Shirley: That's great. When did you all get married?

Elliott: We got married in August and it was hot.

Shirley: Where'd you get married?

Elliott: At the . . .

Shirley: Progressive Club?⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Rich's was a department store retail chain, headquartered in Atlanta that operated in the southern United States from 1867 until 2005. The retailer began in Atlanta as M. Rich & Co. dry goods store and was run by Mauritius Reich (anglicized to 'Morris Rich'), a Hungarian Jewish immigrant. It was renamed M. Rich & Bro. in 1877, when his brother Emanuel was admitted into the partnership, and was again renamed M. Rich & Bros. in 1884 when the third brother Daniel joined the partnership. In 1929, the company was reorganized and the retail portion of the business became simply, Rich's. Many of the former Rich's stores today form the core of Macy's Central, an Atlanta-based division of Macy's, Inc., which formerly operated as Federated Department Stores, Inc.

⁴⁸ The Jewish Progressive Club was a Jewish social organization that was established in 1913 by Russian Jews who felt unwelcome at the Standard Club, where German Jews were predominant. At first the club was located in a rented house until a new club was built on Pryor Street including a swimming pool and a gym. In 1940 the club

Elliott: No, we got married at A.A. [Ahavath Achim] on 10th Street.

Shirley: At the Center on 10th Street?

Elliott: A.A. Center on 10th Street.

Shirley: You remember the year or I'll have to ask Sarah? How many years you been married?
I'll check with . . .

Elliott: 1959. Right?

Shirley: Very good. Hope it goes to 120. Both of you. That's great. Where did you all decide to live when you got married?

Elliott: We moved into an apartment on Greenwood Avenue.

Shirley: Off of Highland Avenue.

Elliott: Off of Highland Avenue. It was owned by Sol Greenberg. Saul Greenberg's oldest brother. He was in the insurance business. His wife's name was Molly. At that time you had to pay through the nose, under the table, to get an apartment.

Shirley: Because it was after the war and everybody was looking for a place to live.

Elliott: Through members of the family who were doing business **with [unintelligible]** got us the apartment had to pay regular price.

Shirley: How much rent?

Elliott: Which was \$37.50 a month.

Shirley: That's a lot.

Elliott: That's a lot of money.

Shirley: For a one-bedroom or two?

Elliott: One-bedroom. An efficiency apartment.

Shirley: Efficiency. Furniture there or you had to buy it?

Elliott: We bought our own furniture.

Shirley: Remember where you got it?

Elliott: Furniture store.

Shirley: Where'd you buy the furniture? Sometimes schlock houses,⁴⁹ sometimes Rich's?

Elliott: Schlock houses at that time were selling all the Jews furniture.

opened a larger facility at 1050 Techwood Drive in Midtown with three swimming pools, tennis and softball. In 1976 the club moved north to 1160 Moore's Mill Road near Interstate 75. The property was eventually sold as the club faced financial challenges and the Carl E. Sanders Family YMCA at Buckhead opened in 1996.

⁴⁹ A store that sells cheap, distressed, or defective articles such as furniture.

Shirley: I knew that. That's why I mentioned it.

Elliott: They had all the business. We didn't need to buy a bed because the apartment came with a Murphy bed.⁵⁰ It folded up back to the closet.

Shirley: That's great. That's wonderful. You remember what that place looked like?

Elliott: Yes. One big room that served as living room and . . .

Shirley: Murphy bed hidden . . .

Elliott: . . . the Murphy bed in the closet. It was a big closet.

Shirley: Kitchen?

Elliott: A nice-sized kitchen. Nice-sized breakfast room. That was it. Bathroom.

Shirley: Inside. With a refrigerator or an ice box?

Elliott: Refrigerator.

Shirley: Refrigerator. Whoa. Gas stove?

Elliott: Gas stove.

Shirley: Wow. That's big time stuff. Heat?

Elliott: Furnished heat.

Shirley: Classy. Upstairs or down?

Elliott: First floor.

Shirley: Anybody live near you? Buddies of yours?

Elliott: Not buddy, but the Kolodkins lived on the same floor we did.

Shirley: Kolodkins. Alan's parents?

Elliott: Yes. [unintelligible] his grandparents. Lovely people.

Shirley: Very nice.

Elliott: Several Jewish couples lived there in both units.

Shirley: That's nice.

Elliott: It was two buildings. The Singers lived next door.

Shirley: Sol?

Elliott: Sol Singer.

Shirley: Sol and Ruth Singer.

Elliott: No, not Sol. The other Singer family.

⁵⁰ A Murphy bed (also called a 'wall bed,' 'pull-down bed' or 'fold-down bed') is a bed that is hinged at one end to store vertically against the wall, or inside of a closet or cabinet. The bed is named for William Lawrence Murphy (1876–1959) who applied for his first patents around 1900.

Shirley: I know them, too. Did you have a car yet?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: That's good.

Elliott: I had a car before I left to go to the army.

Shirley: That's pretty big time.

Elliott: When I left to go to the army I sold the car to my aunt, Annie Levitt.

Shirley: You get it back?

Elliott: When I came home from the army I had to buy it back from her. Believe it or not she charged a profit.

Shirley: Look, she's a business woman. What kind of car was it?

Elliott: Oldsmobile.

Shirley: Two-door or four?

Elliott: Four-door.

Shirley: Four-door Oldsmobile. Shift?

Elliott: No, it was an automatic. I bought it from my brother-in-law's father, Cohen. He had a pawn shop on Decatur Street. Nice store [unintelligible] . . .

Shirley: It's amazing how things were done. Was Sarah working?

Elliott: Oh, she was born in Rich's.

Shirley: Born in Rich's?

Elliott: She was working in Rich's.

Shirley: Doing what? You'll have to answer for it.

Elliott: She was Assistant Buyer for the Children's Department.

Shirley: That's a big deal.

Elliott: She thought it was.

Shirley: She was over 21. She wasn't lying or anything.

Elliott: That's right.

Shirley: Now she must have moved up from someplace to get to the buyer's position.

Elliott: No, she went to work there as Assistant Buyer.

Shirley: That's pretty classy. That was a beautiful store. It was a great store then. You were doing what? You're in the chicken business. She's working at Rich's.

Elliott: I was in the chicken business.

Shirley: Pretty soon didn't Edward show up?

Elliott: After five years.

Shirley: Yes. Three years.

Elliott: Was it three? It was Marsha . . . five years . . . three years.

Shirley: You know what it was? I'll tell you a story after this between . . . That's a good comment. Then Edward was born. Could Mama keep working?

Elliott: Yes, she kept working after he was born?

Shirley: What'd she do with Edward?

Elliott: Had a maid.

Shirley: Still Jessie?

Elliott: No. How long? You didn't go back to work after Edward was born? Stayed home.

Shirley: In those days you could have help that was pretty reasonable. You're in the chicken business. She left that outstanding job. You're making better money now. You're on Greenwood. How long did you stay in that place? Did Marsha . . . was she born on Greenwood?

Elliott: No, Marsha was born on Ponce de Leon Avenue.

Shirley: When did you move over there? What year? 1957?

Elliott: 1950.

Shirley: 1950. Because we moved over here in 1949. Gosh, 1950. Marsha was born here. And the kids?

Elliott: Edward was two months old when we moved here . . . or 3 months old.

Shirley: When he was five he went to Morningside [Elementary School]?

Elliott: He went to Morningside School.

Shirley: Marsha went to . . .

Elliott: . . . Morningside.

Shirley: Then they went to Grady [High School].

Elliott: Right.

Shirley: When they were already in grade school were you still in the chicken business or did you shift out?

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: When did you move to real estate?

Elliott: I got sick when I was in the chicken business. I had a problem with my eye and I wasn't able to work for about a year. Then I went back to start working again. I went to work with Sam Schaffer in the real estate business.

Shirley: What did your brother do? He lost a partner.

Elliott: He stayed in that business for a while afterwards.

Shirley: You went to work for [Sam] Schaffer in real estate.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: What'd you know about real estate? That it was profitable?

Elliott: That you lived in a house. That was it.

Shirley: That's amazing. But the whole time you kept in mind, "I'm a salesperson."

Elliott: The whole time I sold real estate. Still selling.

Shirley: That's the plus. Where did you sell? First thing you sold was where?

Elliott: A house.

Shirley: I know it, Elliott. Where was it?

Elliott: On Brookridge Drive.

Shirley: Brookridge off of Highland Avenue.

Elliott: No, Brookridge is off of Boulevard isn't it?

Shirley: There must be another one because Horowitz used to live on Brookridge Drive.

Elliott: I . . . regardless of where it is.

Shirley: Were you excited? Was it a big deal?

Elliott: Very excited.

Shirley: That's good. How did you stay in that business until you quit?

Elliott: I'm still in it.

Shirley: Yes. Still selling houses.

Elliott: No, I don't fool with houses anymore. All I do now is commercial real estate. Which I don't do much of that now either.

Shirley: When did you realize this is really good? I'm staying with this.

Elliott: After I started making money.

Shirley: That's great. What happened then, Elliott? What were the kids doing right now?

Living around you I should . . . I can talk for you but I won't . . . live right here in the neighbor[hood] with a lot of Jewish kids right around. They enjoyed it?

Elliott: They enjoyed it very much.

Shirley: Edward lives where now?

Elliott: Lives in Birmingham, Alabama.

Shirley: Family?

Elliott: Got two girls and one boy.

Shirley: He's married to . . . bless her heart . . . to Betty Ann Harvey's daughter, Susan.

Elliott: Susan Jacobson. Beautiful girl.

Shirley: How old are their children? How old are the kids now?

Elliott: Marc is 24 or 25. Robin is 22 and Alison is 20. We don't have any more teenage grandchildren.

Shirley: What about Marsha? Where does she live?

Elliott: Marsha lives in Alexandria, Virginia.

Shirley: She have a family?

Elliott: She's got two boys.

Shirley: You told me her married name.

Elliott: Benjamin Brown and Jeffrey.

Shirley: How old are those boys?

Elliott: Benjamin is 24 and Jeffrey is 20.

Shirley: That's great. That's your pleasure. That's your *naches* [Yiddish: contentment, pride].

Elliott: Both those boys. Benjamin graduated from University of Virginia [Charlottesville, Virginia].

Shirley: Good school.

Elliott: He's working out in California for a subsidiary of Paramount Columbia Pictures. Jeffrey is a junior at University of Virginia.

Shirley: That's a fine school. They have to be good students. Where are the other grandchildren? Where are Edward's kids?

Elliott: Marc worked in New York for three years when he graduated from school. Now he's moved back to Birmingham to go into his father's business.

Shirley: Great.

Elliott: Alscan Security.

Shirley: Nice. And the other two kids.

Elliott: Robin moved to Atlanta. She's working for Bain & Company.

Shirley: Good to have a representative here.

Elliott: The other's still in school at University of Arizona [Tucson, Arizona].

Shirley: When you were growing up you went to school, you got an education, had to get a job quick. No college, this, that. Then kids started going to college and choosing professions with the purpose, the same thing that you had. Make a living.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Make a living. Do you remember anything that was happening politically that was happening when you were here before the war or after the war? Anything you want to share? Who was governor?

Elliott: I remember the fight with Governor [Herman] Talmadge.⁵¹ That was after the war though.

Shirley: What fight?

Elliott: He didn't want to give up the office after he was . . .

Shirley: Yes.

Elliott: I remember Mayor James L. Key.⁵²

Shirley: A school's named after him [James L. Key Elementary School—Atlanta, Georgia]/

Elliott: I remember Mayor [William B.] Hartsfield.⁵³ He was one of the best mayors Atlanta's ever had. He's the one that really started Atlanta . . .

Shirley: Moving.

Elliott: . . . moving.

Shirley: Forward Atlanta.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Herman Talmadge (1913 – 2002) was Governor of Georgia twice; once in 1947 and then from 1951 to 1955. He spent most of his public service in the United States Senate, serving from 1957 to 1981. He was a Democrat. His father, Eugene Talmadge, won Georgia's 1946 gubernatorial election, but he died before taking office. According to the state's Constitution, if the governor-elect died before his term began, the Georgia General Assembly would choose between the second and third-place finishers for the successor. Since Eugene Talmadge ran unopposed among Democrats, party officials arranged for write-in votes for Herman Talmadge. Melvin E. Thompson, the lieutenant governor-elect; Ellis Arnall, the prior governor; and Herman Talmadge as write-in candidate, all arranged to be sworn in and were concurrently trying to conduct state business from the Georgia State Capitol. Arnall relinquished his claim in favor of Thompson. Ultimately, Thompson was supported by the Supreme Court of Georgia and Talmadge yielded to the state Supreme Court ruling. He prepared to run for the special gubernatorial election in 1948, and defeated incumbent Governor Thompson. Two years later, Talmadge was elected to a full term in the 1950 election. Talmadge was barred by law from seeking another full term as Governor in 1954.

⁵² James Lee Key (1867 – 1939) was a lawyer who served as the 45th and 48th Mayor of Atlanta, Georgia. His first term was from 1919 to 1923. His second term was from 1931 to 1937.

⁵³ William Berry Hartsfield, Sr. (1890-1971), served as the 49th and 51st Mayor of Atlanta. His tenure extended from 1937 to 1941 and again from 1942 to 1962, making him the longest-serving mayor of his native Atlanta.

Elliott: That's right. Atlanta never was . . . I would say, really anti-black. I think the blacks got along better in Atlanta than they did anywhere. I really do. Atlanta has a very good large black population. I imagine it's because of the universities here.

Shirley: Right. It's over 55 percent at this point. But were you ever politically involved?

Elliott: Yes, I piddled in politics. One time I was the Chairman of the State Veterans' Club for the candidate for president.

Shirley: Which president?

Elliott: He was a democrat.

Shirley: Most of them were.

Elliott: I swear I don't remember his name.

Shirley: Was it [Jimmy] Carter?

Elliott: No, it was before Carter, way before Carter.

Shirley: Roosevelt. That was before the war.

Elliott: After Roosevelt. He was defeated anyhow. He didn't win.

Shirley: But you tried.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: What about clubs? Did you ever belong to any clubs socially after you were married? We had the Standard Club . . . ⁵⁵

Elliott: No.

Shirley: . . . and the Mayfair⁵⁶ and the Progressive Club. What'd you do for social activities as a family?

⁵⁴ In an effort to advance the City of Atlanta from a small southern town to one of the top cities in the United States several campaigns have taken the moniker of Forward Atlanta. The first campaign was headed by Ivan Allen, Sr. in 1925 with the goal of raising money from the business community to promote Atlanta as an emerging city. Since then, several more Forward Atlanta campaigns have taken on a variety of initiatives including hosting the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games, regional transportation, saving Grady Hospital, and promoting Atlanta to international markets.

⁵⁵ The Standard Club is a private, country club, with a Jewish heritage dating back to 1867. The club originated as Concordia Association in Downtown Atlanta. In 1905 it was reorganized as the Standard Club and moved into the former mansion of William C. Sanders near where Turner Field is now located. In the late 1920's the club moved to Ponce de Leon Avenue in Midtown Atlanta. The club later moved to the Brookhaven area and opened in what is now the Lenox Park business park. It was located there until 1983 when the club moved to its present location in Johns Creek in Atlanta's northern suburbs.

⁵⁶ The Mayfair Club opened in 1938 at 1456 Spring Street in Midtown Atlanta. The two-story club was a focal point of Jewish life in the city for more than 25 years. The club was founded in 1930 and first met at the Biltmore Hotel. The club was visited by Eleanor Roosevelt, Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, mayors Ivan Allen and William Berry Hartsfield, senators Herman Talmadge and Richard Russell, and Governor Carl Sanders. Fire destroyed the Mayfair Club on December 4, 1964.

Elliott: We went to the movies.

Shirley: Yes. More than 15 cents.

Elliott: Just about. That's about all we did. Go visit relatives.

Shirley: Got you, had . . .

Elliott: Back in those days . . .

Shirley: You had a big family.

Elliott: We went to visit relatives mostly.

Shirley: On Sunday.

Elliott: On Sunday we'd go visit my mother.

Shirley: When did Mama pass away? Do you remember?

Elliott: Mama passed away about 15, 20 years ago.

Shirley: Do you have a big family album that you keep all the photos in, all the memories?

Elliott: We got a box.

Shirley: I have several boxes. I'm sure you have a nice picture of yourself you're going to give to me so we can put it with this record.

Elliott: You want an early or late?

Shirley: Whatever you choose. I don't want a *bar mitzvah* picture.

Elliott: I can give you a nice picture of me and Sarah together or one myself. I've got one in uniform when I was in the army.

Shirley: If you've got copies and can make us copies or I will, I'll take them. Who keeps the family records of everything?

Elliott: My sister Bertha used to keep up with everything going on.

Shirley: Did she genealogically track back?

Elliott: At that time she knew, she kept records of the entire family, birthdays, anniversary dates, deaths.

Shirley: Bertha Cohen.

Elliott: Yes, Bertha Cohen.

Shirley: Both of your sisters sat behind me at A.A. for years and years and years. I just loved her. Bertha did all the record keeping.

Elliott: When she passes away . . .

Shirley: Who did that? Who took it over?

Elliott: Nobody. No one.

Shirley: Not one of the children?

Elliott: No.

Shirley: Oh, gosh.

Elliott: We have a lot of the family history on movies.

Shirley: Oh, who did the videos?

Elliott: I did some. My brother . . .

Shirley: Butler . . .

Elliott: Butler did a lot of them. Benny Cohen did a lot of them.

Shirley: Do you ever look at them?

Elliott: Haven't looked at them in years. They're 16 millimeter.

Shirley: Need to transfer that and set it down.

Elliott: I hope they're still in good shape.

Shirley: I hope so. You're still in good shape. That's pretty good.

Elliott: I hope the pictures are still in good shape.

Shirley: You do anything to stay in good shape except eat good food? Any exercises.

Elliott: I'm not able to.

Shirley: Just sit there?

Elliott: I do as much as I can.

Shirley: That's as good as you ought to do. Just need to stick around. That's all we need to do is stick around. I want to know a little bit about the kids. What kind of guy is Edward and what kind of child was Marsha? Just a little of their personality.

Elliott: Edward is very friendly. I mean, he's got a good sense of humor.

Shirley: Wonder where he got that?

Elliott: I have no idea.

Shirley: Me either.

Elliott: He likes to do things for other people. He's very charitable, very charitable.

Shirley: So good.

Elliott: He's got a good level head on him.

Shirley: How old is Edward now?

Elliott: Edward is 58 years old.

Shirley: I remember a little boy running around.

Elliott: They **made [unintelligible]** in Birmingham. I mean he is the . . .

Shirley: . . . man in Birmingham.

Elliott: . . . man in Birmingham.

Shirley: How did he choose to move to Birmingham?

Elliott: He was working for Oscar Meyer Packing Company. They transferred him to Birmingham and that's where he went.

Shirley: What about Marsha? Different kind of child?

Elliott: No, Marsha is a very . . . she was very sweet girl, very caring.

Shirley: That's her mom.

Elliott: Yes. She's a lot like Sarah. Edward has a lot of his mother's traits. I mean he's very . . .

Shirley: He got lucky, didn't he, Elliott?

Elliott: None of them took after me.

Shirley: Thank goodness.

Elliott: Neither one of them. Right. Marsha got out of school and went to work for an advertising company. She tried to . . . she took the [unintelligible] being a teacher. She tried that for a while. She didn't like it.

Shirley: She flipped to advertising? That's hectic work.

Elliott: She went to work at McCann Erickson Advertising Company.

Shirley: That's great.

Elliott: She went to work for them for a while. Then she went to work for the National Druggist Association, as the . . .

Shirley: [unintelligible]

Elliott: No. Graphic . . .

Shirley: Graphic arts . . .

Elliott: Graphics . . . but she didn't know anything about . . .

Shirley: Oh, got the job.

Elliott: Got the job.

Shirley: Good talker.

Elliott: Then she went to work for the Republican National Committee. She worked for them for years and years and years until the last few years.

Shirley: That is so impressive. Those are good genes.

Elliott: Now she's in business for herself, in the graphics business.

Shirley: Which she found out how to do.

Elliott: She done it for 30 years she ought to know how to do it.

Shirley: That's so wonderful.

Elliott: She does some beautiful work.

Shirley: Tell me . . . this was the Sabbath⁵⁷ . . . I know you all were always in synagogue. Was the Sabbath one that was once observed? Lighting your candles, anything beyond? Tell me about holidays with you now. Because you said before it was always at Mama's house.

Elliott: Holidays now is with cousins, my Harold and Diane Cohen. We go there for *Pesach* and visit other cousins, go out for dinner with them, and have our friends.

Shirley: Have you still got a pretty good amount of family members, cousins I know you have. Aunts and uncles, anybody here now?

Elliott: Very few.

Shirley: Any of them in Atlanta?

Elliott: In fact, all the aunts and uncles are gone.

Shirley: What's the sweetest memory that you have of holidays? You can go all the way back to when you were a kid.

Elliott: I like *Rosh Ha-shanah* . . . the meal with . . .

Shirley: I do too.

Elliott: And *Pesach*. I loved the *Pesach seder* when I was little. I really enjoyed it.

Shirley: Who led that *seder*?

Elliott: My father.

Shirley: In Hebrew, in Yiddish, in English?

Elliott: He read it in English.

Shirley: Did you know what he was saying?

⁵⁷ *Shabbat* (Hebrew) or *Shabbos* (Yiddish) is the Jewish day of rest and is observed on Saturdays. *Shabbat* observance entails refraining from work activities, often with great rigor, and engaging in restful activities to honor the day. *Shabbat* begins at sundown on Friday night and is ushered in by lighting candles and reciting a blessing. It is closed the following evening with the recitation of the *havdalah* blessing.

Elliott: He could read English.

Shirley: I remember that myself. I don't know what my father said, may he rest in peace, but I knew it was a beautiful holiday.

Elliott: Actually we started going over Sarah's mother's house where her grandfather could conduct the *seder*. Now he conducted a . . .

Shirley: . . . a real *seder*.

Elliott: He conducted what the *seder* is. I mean a real *seder*.

Shirley: Last a long time.

Elliott: It was done right.

Shirley: Good food.

Elliott: Yes.

Shirley: Who did the cooking at their house?

Elliott: Her mama I reckon.

Shirley: "I reckon" is a Southern comment? I reckon.

Elliott: Sure is.

Shirley: Somebody up North wouldn't know what you were saying. When you went into the service, with your Southern accent did anybody make any comment?

Elliott: Very few Yankees were in my outfit.

Shirley: No kidding.

Elliott: We were all mostly Southern, Midwest, from around Louisiana, Midwest.

Shirley: At this point now, have you retired or you still *pahtchkying* [Yiddish: fooling around, idling] around?

Elliott: I'm more or less retired.

Shirley: How do you spend your time? In love with your wife still? That's good.

Elliott: Spend my time sitting around.

Shirley: Yes. You did such a beautiful job.

Elliott: Trying to work a little bit in the office.

Shirley: Do you all travel at all?

Elliott: We did. We haven't traveled in couple of years now.

Shirley: But it's sweet . . . pictures? Somebody's got pictures. Nobody's keeping the record, but somebody's got pictures.

Elliott: We got pictures. We've got pictures of all of a lot our cruises and trips.

Shirley: Elliott, if you were going to leave . . . look at all these pictures around here. If you were going to leave one bit of information that you would want your children or grandchildren to remember, what would you come up with? What would you tell them? You're here. You can tell them, but if you really wanted to tell them something important, what?

Elliott: To get along with your family.

Shirley: Yes.

Elliott: Get along with your family really. Don't have any arguments with them and just be relatives and be good relatives. Be especially good to your parents. You only have just one set of parents.

Shirley: Your kids have been good to you. You've got a lot to be proud of.

Elliott: I'm very proud of them. Both of them.

Shirley: I thank you so much. And all the organizations who sponsor this, thank you. It was a delight to interview you.

Elliott: Thank you.

Shirley: I enjoyed it. Thank you so much.

Elliott: You're a very good interviewer.

Shirley: How old were you when you got married?

Elliott: I was 28.

<End Disk 1>

INTERVIEW ENDS