

Tape 1 (40) - Side 1

Q: Could you tell me where you were born, when, and how you came to Seattle?

A: Well, I was born in North Wing. And I came to Seattle in 1911, with my mother and four other children.

Q: Why did she bring you here?

A: My father had stopped here in 1909, and then he sent for us in 1911.

Q: So he was already here.

A: He was already here, right. And he had a home for us to go to.

Q: What did he do?

A: Well, at that time, he was a gripman, they called them, on the cable car. The Madison cable car. And then from there he went with the Seattle school board.

Q: For the school board?

A: Yes.

Q: And your mother just worked at home?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Did you go to school in Seattle, high school, or...

A: No, no high school. I went to Stevens Elementary School, and then () school. I finished there, I think. I don't think it was eighth, it was the sixth grade. And that was all the schooling I had.

Q: Do you remember when you were growing up, did your family discuss politics?

A: No, no. Not much that I can remember of that.

Q: Do you remember what newspapers they read?

A: Well I know we had the Seattle PI.

Q: Do you remember if they ever read the Union Record?

A: No.

Q: No they didn't, or no...

A: No they didn't.

Q: So what were you doing when the general strike started?

A: I was working in a small candy factory.

Q: In Seattle.

A: M-hmm.

Q: Do you remember why it was called, or who called it?

A: No, I don't.

Q: (), you said something about the ship yards.

A: Yes. There were quite a few ship yards in Seattle in those days. I had a brother, about 17, that went to work then, well, let's see now, (), Ames Ship Yard, () something. Ames, Cobbs, yeah, he worked there.

Q: When the strike was called, or when they decided to have the general strike, and before it actually started, do you remember people talking about it? Was it something...

A: No, I don't.

Q: It wasn't a topic that people...

A: No, not at home, it wasn't.

Q: How about with your friends, or at work?

A: No, no.

Q: And what was the general strike like?

A: Well, I know, I can't remember the date, but I know that during the strike they released alot of the soldiers at Fort Louis, and they came to Seattle to, you know, to lead, some of them had come from back East. There was one young fellow that I knew from Chicago. Didn't think much of Seattle. Couldn't find a restaurant, or nothing, any place to...

Q: Nothing was open?

A: No. It was a general strike.

Q: Did you work during it, or were you out also?

A: No, you couldn't get to work.

Q: Couldn't get to work because of the...

A: No, the street cars, there were no street cars running.

Q: Was your factory a union factory, or...

A: No.

Q: So if you had been able to get there, you would have worked during the strike?

A: Well, now I don't know, whether my dad would have let me or not.

Q: Was he a strong union leader?

A: No, I can't remember that, but then I don't really know whether he would have allowed me to go.

Q: Why would he have not allowed you?

A: Well, I suppose thinking of the danger of going to work, you know, then. I don't think it's as bad as it is nowadays, but it was pretty bad. You might get hurt, you know.

Q: I see. What did you think of it at the time? Do you remember?

A: No, I can't think of it, remember, you know, because I knew everybody was on strike and I can't remember. It seemed like we had plenty to eat at home, and everything.

Q: () were you in favor of it, or against it?

A: Oh, no. I can't remember.

Q: Do you remember if there was any violence?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Do you remember the army coming in? Was the army around?

A: No, I can't remember. No. () it was so far away, but I can't remember any troops coming in.

Q: How did you get information during the strike?

A: Oh, that I don't know. Well, I suppose, no, I don't know whether the newspapers, I couldn't tell you whether the newspapers were on strike or not.

Q: Did you see any of the dining halls that they set up? They had these dining halls for the (). You said you ate at home.

A: M-hmm. No, not in the general strike, I don't.

Q: Did you have trouble getting food at home, or anything?

A: Not that I can remember. The small grocery store, the neighborhood grocery stores, you know, they weren't these chain stores then.

Q: Were they open during the strike?

A: The small one near us was, uh-huh.

Q: Where were you living then?

A: In what's part of the central area now.

Q: Who do you remember as the leaders, I don't mean the people, but was it a union strike, or an IWW strike? Who was running the strike?

A: I don't know who was running it, but I know the IWW's were involved, I think, but I don't know who was running it, no.

Q: Do you remember how long it lasted?

A: No.

Q: How about why it ended?

A: No. No.

Q: Did you think it was worth it, for labor?

A: That I couldn't tell you.

Q: Did it affect your life, or the life of the city at all?

A: No.

Q: When you think about the strike, what's the mental picture that you have of it? What was your biggest impression?

A: Well, the only thing I can remember is not being able to go to work. That's the only thing.

Q: Because of the street cars...

A: Yes. There were no street cars.

Q: Do you remember Olie Hansen?

A: Oh, I know he was mayor of Seattle.

Q: Is there anything else you remember about him?

A: No, only that it was during his time, I believe. If I remember right, yeah, I'm sure. Olie Hansen was mayor.

Q: Do you remember...

A: I don't remember the year.

Q: Do you remember him in any connection with the strike?

A: No.

Q: How about Anna Luise Strong?

A: Oh, I read about her, but I don't, there was nothing, you know.

Q: How about Jimmy Duncan?

A: A Scotchman, I know that much about him. No, I don't know anything else.

Q: Did you know any members of the IWW?

A: No.

Q: They weren't in the city?

A: Well, I don't know.

Q: And what did you do after the strike? Just go back to work in the factory?

A: No, I think I was married then, yeah. A short time after the strike.

Q: Did you continue to work outside your home?

A: No.

Q: Did you have a family?

A: I had two sons.

Q: What did they do?

A: What did they do?

Q: Yeah, what did they do then?

A: Oh, then?

Q: No,...

A: No, they're up in years now, of course. Well, one now works for the telephone company.

And the other one is an insurance representative.

Q: What sorts of organizations did you belong to?

A: Not any.

Q: No political, or...

A: Oh, no, no.

Q: Or religious organizations?

A: No. Just a little church group at one time.

Q: Have you been a politically active person?

A: No, I haven't.

Q: Do you usually vote?

A: Well, yes and no. Sometimes I do, and sometimes I don't.

Q: How about back in the days of the general strike? Were you a politically active person then?

A: No. No.

Q: Has there been a political leader in the last couple of years who you felt spoke for you? What's the most important issue facing the country today?

A: No, I couldn't answer that. I'm not much on the (). No, I couldn't. So, that part of it, I couldn't remember anything.

Q: What do you like most about this country?

A: Well, everything.

Q: That makes my next question a little harder, I was going to ask you, what do you like least about this country?

A: Nothing.

Q: Has there been anything in the news lately that's made you feel especially good?

A: No. No, I can't remember.

Q: Anything that's made you feel especially angry?

A: No.

Q: What great people, living or dead, do you admire most? No heroes or heroines?

A: No, no.

Q: () when you were raising your sons, () that that was a great person?

A: No, not me.

Q: Do you think most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful with people?

A: I guess some could be trusted, but others can't.

Q: Do you think that most of the time people try to be helpful, or they're mostly looking out for themselves?

A: Well, there again, some are helpful and some are out for themselves.

Q: Would most people try to take advantage of you, if they had the chance, or would they try to be fair?

A: I don't think so, I don't think they'd get away with it.

Q: What did you think of the civil rights movement?

A: Well, I wasn't interested in that. I never kept up with it.

Q: How about the student anti-war movement?

A: No.

Q: How about () the labor movement today?

A: No.

Q: How about the women's movement?

A: No.

Q: No feelings about...

A: No, no, no. They need younger ones for that.

Q: Do you think what most young people need most of all is strict discipline from their parents?

A: I believe they need more than they do get, some of them, that's for sure.

Q: Do you think most people who don't get ahead, just don't have enough will power?

A: No. Sometimes I guess it works that way. Then, just the opposite. No, I don't think I could really answer that question.

Q: Do you think a few strong leaders could do more for the country than all the laws and the talking?

A: No, () you asked your questions yet?

Q: I only have about five left.

A: Oh dear, I'm going to be hungry.

Q: Well, I'll try to hurry. People sometimes say that an insult to your honor shouldn't be forgotten. Do you think that's true? Do you agree with that?

A: No, I don't. Like you mean, somebody has done something to you, you can't make up?

Q: M-hmm.

A: No, I think that you can, you know, make up. You can make it up to someone, I guess that's the answer.

Q: How do you feel about school desegregation question in Seattle?

A: Oh, I couldn't say, because I, like I said, we lived in the central area, the north end of the central area, and we didn't have any trouble in those days. We had neighbors among the black people, the Chinese and the Japanese, and no trouble with anyone. Never have had. I've known some real nice people among them.

Q: Do you think a general strike could happen today?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Are there any conditions under which you would support a general strike?

A: No.

Q: How necessary are employers to running a business? Can workers run businesses without employers?

A: No, I don't believe that.

Q: How about these cooperatives, where workers decide what they're going to do themselves, and split up the profits. Can they work?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Have you read anything about the general strike since those days?

A: No. That's it?

END OF INTERVIEW.