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## 02 Interview with Jack and Charlotte Harvey

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# Interview with Jack and Charlotte Harvey

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Reference: Jack and Charlotte Harvey, interview by James A. Jones (West Chester, March 30, 1996).

This series of three interviews took place in the Harvey's living room in Riggstown throughout the fall of 1996. The participants were the interviewer, Jim Jones (JJ), Jack Harvey (JH) and his wife Charlotte (CH). The first interview is transcribed from a tape recording, while the last two interviews were transcribed from memory and hand-written notes.

## *BACKGROUND INFORMATION*

Jack Harvey was born on June 8, 1919 in a hospital in Philadelphia, PA. He was raised at 539 South Franklin Street by his mother, Gertrude Harvey, and his grandparents, Alonzo and Eva Harvey. After World War II, he moved around the corner to a house on East Niels Street and lived there until shortly before he died on July 5, 2002.

Charlotte Elizabeth Baum Harvey was born on August 12, 1924 in Downingtown, PA to James Edward Baum & Frances Livinia Jordan. She married Jack Harvey in 1942.

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[begin interview]

JH: Mabel Thompson was born at 388 East Niels Street and she married my uncle, "Jumbo," Earl H. Harvey. Nobody ever knew what the H was for.

JJ: Where did he live at the time? When Mabel was growing up, were they neighbors?

JH: He lived at 539 South Franklin Street.

JJ: So they were neighborhood sweethearts?

JH: He had been married once before, but it didn't take. He married Lib somebody.

JH: Every one of these houses had [a lot of different people who lived there]. As far back as I can remember, the first ones I can remember, lived in that house over there (388 East Niels Street), was the Thompson family. Old Louie Thompson worked in the ice plant up on Union Street. The mother never worked anywhere, but there were three kids. You'll find as we go along that there were an awful lot of nicknames in this neighborhood. Everyone had a nickname and the Thompsons were the same way. The oldest one over there was Lou, but everyone called him "Squarehead." [laughter] That was his nickname, Squarehead Thompson. Maybe I shouldn't tell you Mabel's ... it wasn't a very nice nickname.

JJ: [explained that JH and CH would have a chance to edit the transcript of the interview]

JH: There were three Thompson kids: Squarehead, Mabel and Ralph. Ralph was never called Ralph; he was always called "Tarband" or "Rabbit."

JJ: From the Brer Rabbit story?

JH: I don't know where he got those nicknames from. He was hell on a bicycle. Every place that guy went, he had his bicycle.

JJ: How come everybody got nicknames? What was your nickname?

JH: I was one of those that didn't get a nickname. Or if I did, I don't remember it.

CH: I don't remember it either.

JJ: I haven't seen it anywhere, and I have seen nicknames for other people. Charlie Gincley was "Cie" [pronounced "Kie," rhymes with "tie"].

[stuff deleted]

JJ: I made up copies of a map of the area in 1933 for you.

JH: 1933. That's the year my grandmother died.

JJ: That was Alonzo's wife? What was her name? Eva?

JH: Eva. Huber was her maiden name.

JJ: Did she live in West Chester?

JH: I ... [tentative] think she lived in West Chester when her and grandfather got married. Over there on Matlack Street, between Magnolia and Union.

CH: Didn't the Hubers have a bakery?

JH: There have been several Hubers who had bakeries in West Chester. That was one of them. Her parents had a bakery shop up on Gay Street. Her parents came from Germany, and when he died, everything died with him. He never put anything done on paper.

JJ: Was Alonzo born here in West Chester?

JH: No. The first place they lived, when they moved to West Chester, was where Wacky Townsend lives (400 East Niels Street). After that, I don't know when he started buying property, but grandpa owned a lot of houses.

JJ: [explained how my research on deeds yielded homeowner names] For instance, your house ...

JH: Woodward's?

JJ: That's interesting. Ann and Sidy mentioned Woodward's, but I haven't found their deed yet. When did they live here?

JH: When I was really young. There was a girl, they called her Tommy. She used to go with Chet Zircher when he moved here. There was a guy named Brick--that was another nickname--Brick Yarnall, who lived with the Woodward's.

JJ: I found some Yarnalls ... oh no, these are a lot later.

JH: That (Woodward) was Jean Rings' daughter's husband. He got transferred out to California... Now they are back here.

JJ: Let me see how many of these names you recognize for your house. I've got your deed from 1956.

JH: No. Grandpop...

JJ: You bought it from the Kempners.

JH: Grandpop bought this house during the second World War.

CH: We moved here in 48... 49. It was Grandpop's then.

JJ: So it was Alonzo's before then, and then Woodward's before that. . . I'll bet I have this wrong.

JH: I'm not sure. Boyles lived here, but Boyles didn't own the house. Grandpop bought this while I was in the Philippine Islands.

JJ: That sounds like what Anne and Sidy said. I need to go back and check the records.

[discussion of Alonzo Harvey's properties on East Niels Street]

[discussion of owners of 388 East Niels Street]

JH: The guy I remember was from Jamaica. (in 1960s) He lived there for a while, I don't know if he owned it. That was shortly after Elmie Davis had it.

JJ: Then it might have been that Cuthbertsons owned it, but rented it out to somebody (the Jamaicans).

JH: I can't remember, but the guy had a thick accent... singsong... he drove tow motor over at Wind Turbine.

JJ: [discussion of 390 East Niels Street, 392 East Niels Street] William and Eleanor Townsend bought 392 East Niels Street in 1922.

JH: Bill Townsend.

JJ: I hear he was the uncle of Honey Hamilton, who lived up at. . . (398 East Niels Street).

JH: Old grandmom Townsend lived up next to Davis's (396 East Niels Street). The Townsends & the Davises, that's a story in itself.

JJ: Townsends, Smiley, Hamilton and Davis, they were all related? Harvey, Gincley and Nichols were all related?

JH: Joe Nichols... through my grandmother somehow. They go back to ... the Gibsons ...

JJ: The Gibson's up on Matlack Street?

CH: Jack [Gibson]

JH: Well, in a roundabout way. I couldn't begin to tell you exactly what the relation was. My grandmother was related to Clara Gibson; Chauncey Bates' father, Frank Bates; Elmer Crosby's mother ... they were some kind of cousins way back.

JJ: How many brothers and sisters did your grandfather Alonzo have?

JH: Uncle Harry, Uncle Will, ... there was one in Florida, I think his name was Horace.

CH: [sounds like] Aunt Libbey? [after discussion on June 3, 1996, we concluded that this was Aunt Mary]

JH: [still thinking] Grandpop had several brothers. Uncle Horace, Harry, Wilmot. They called Wilmot Uncle Will. He lived up in Stowe near Pottstown. Uncle Harry lived on Barnard Street. ... Grandpop had a lot of cousins ... Uncle Kersey ... he's the one who traced the family tree back to 1710.

JJ: Do you have a copy of that?

JH: No. All the paperwork on that disappeared.

[tape stopped and restarted]

JH: Kersey Harvey had one daughter, Ethel. She taught school over in Kennett Square and married one of her students. During the war [WWII], she stepped off a curbstone and someone didn't see her. She was killed. She was the only one who had control over all those [Kersey's] papers, since it was her father who did all of that. The story was that in 1710, a man named Osbourne and his wife, and a man named William Harvey, left England. When they got over here, they settled in this part of the country. Shortly after they got here, Osbourne died and William Harvey married his widow. That's all I know about the beginning of the Harveys in this area. They settled out in around Green Valley, out below Mortonville ... there are a lot of places out there with the Harvey name on it. Harvey's Bridge, Harvey Road.

JJ: That covers one of my main questions [about when the Harvey's got here]. Would either one of you know when the Gincleys got here?

JH: That's a mystery. "Reds" Gincley had a couple of brothers. One was "Eber." [Eber Garrett Gincley, 205 W. Union Street. From GINCLEY.INT]

JJ: Is he the one who lived up near Pottstown?

JH: No, Eber lived right here. The one up in Pottstown, he was ...

JJ: George maybe?

JH: Right, George. And then Reds had a sister who lived out around York, but I never heard her last name. ... But there is quite a history on "Reds" Gincley himself [Levi Gincley, Anne's father-in-law]. There used to be an opera house in West Chester. It was still there when I was a kid. The courthouse is built on what used to be opera house property, right across from the bank up on High Street. Back then, there was a lot of vaudeville, so Uncle Reds and ... the guy who used to drive on the ice wagon with him ... they were into vaudeville up there a couple times at the old opera house. [after rereading the transcript, H thought that Levi Gincley's singing partner was named Chess or Chester Burns]

JJ: Singing and dancing stuff?

JH: Song and dance. Reds was a colorful man. Not only with the red hair. He was an outdoorsman ... a pretty good drinker ... him and Uncle Jumbo [Earl Harvey] were the first ones in the neighborhood to own an automobile, they bought it together, an old Ford touring car. "Reds" Gincley owned the first radio in this block. When he played the radio, you couldn't get near the house [because] people were lined up out in the street trying to hear the radio.

JJ: Was he one of the first to get a television too?

JH: That could be. I'm not sure.

JJ: They [Siddy Stanley and Anne Gincley] remembered, probably back in the 1950s, that all the kids in the neighborhood would go over there on Sundays, Sunday afternoons, and watch TV. They also said that sometimes "Reds" came home from work and couldn't find a place to sit down. He'd get mad about it.

[laughter, discussion about when TVs first came out]

JH: The first one [TV] we had, Uncle Mike gave us. We sure couldn't afford one. [Uncle Mike's real name was Leroy Harvey, son of Alonzo.] Back when I was little, Reds drove a truck and delivered ice, because nobody had a refrigerator back then.

JJ: They [S&A] said Reds used to work at the Brandywine Mushrooms.

JH: He worked several places before he worked at Brandywine. He worked in the cannery down there.

JJ: They [S&A] said something I didn't understand. They made it sound as if there was a "black" and a "white" part of the mushroom business.

JH: There used to be a lot of blacks working in the growing plant where they grew the mushrooms, and then there were mostly white in the cannery. But there was a mixture at both places. "Reds" never had any trouble with colored people. He'd get along with anybody, he was that kind of guy.

JJ: [comment about vaudeville, audiences and "getting along"]

JH: Reds and Uncle Jum, they could almost live off the land. In the summertime, they'd hunt frogs and fish, all the year hunting and trapping ...

JJ: Back here in the marsh [gesture towards Greenfield Park] or up in the Poconos?

JH: They went all over. I don't know about the Poconos, mostly local, within a few hours of West Chester. They didn't do it just for the fun of it either. They did it to put food on the table.

JJ: Reds had ... what, ten kids in the house?

JH: They had ten.

JJ: How many were in your house [when you were] growing up?

JH: Mother had eight.

JJ: You were at 539 South Franklin Street?

JH: No, my grandparents lived there. My mother got married ... could you shut that thing off?

[tape stops and starts]

JH: ... my stepfather was a carpenter, but when times got hard, he would take any kind of work. He worked in the mushroom houses. He worked for a dairy farmer delivering milk, and I used to go with him, early in the morning.

JJ: Did he have a truck or a horse and wagon?

JH: He had an old Model A Ford station wagon. I think it belonged to the people who had the farm, but we used it to deliver milk. It was old.

JJ: [describe S&A's work for tag companies] These two women basically worked their whole lives.

JH: Honey Hamilton was one of them. She worked up at the tag factory ... I'm not sure which one [Denny Tag or Keystone Tag].

JJ: It sounded to me like the people in this neighborhood had to work all they could.

JH: That's for sure. They got just so many cents a hundred for putting the strings on the tags. They didn't have machines doing that. They'd take the tag ... some had a string with a loop, and others had a wire they twisted on.

JJ: Well, what was the first job you ever got? How old were you then?

JH: [smiling] The first job I ever had was mowing grass for my next-door neighbor.

JJ: And you were how old then?

JH: Well ... old enough to push a lawn mower, probably ten. The people I mowed for, he was McDevitt, old man McDevitt. His son was a sportswriter for the Daily Local News. That was the one they called "Duke" ... What Duke's first name was, I don't know, but [they called him] Duke McDevitt. There are still McDevitt's at the Daily Local News. The one is a photographer, I believe, at the Daily Local News now, he is Duke McDevitt's son.

JJ: That is one thing that I have noticed about this town. If you find someone who was a lawyer, his son wound up being a judge ...

CH: We had a judge ...

JH: Grandpop had a cousin who was a judge.

JJ: Who was that?

JH: Joe Harvey's father ... Judge Ernest Harvey.

JJ: He was about your age?

JH: No. Joe's still a lawyer uptown, but his father was a judge, Judge Ernest Harvey. [During a followup conversation on June 3, 1996, H & C estimated that Ernest was 20-30 years older than Jack, so he might have been born 1889-1899.]

JJ: When I was up at the [Chester County] Historical Society, I saw newspaper clippings about Joe Harvey who went off to war around the same time as you.

JH: Joe's in the age bracket, but I'm not sure how old he is.

JJ: I saw that he got some kind of medal or something. Does that ring a bell?

JH: I don't remember. I wasn't around here when he got it.

JJ: When did you get back [from WWII]?

JH: I got back in the spring of '46. I was over in the Philippines.

JJ: [new subject] Here are a couple of family names ... you mentioned that the Woodwards used to live in this house [387 East Nields Street]. Holstons ...

Both: Oh, did we know the Holstons!

JH: Benjamin Holston. The Holstons lived in several houses. One time they lived up where Townsends live, and they were over on the corner, 386 [ East Nields Street] for a while. And when Ben Holston died, they lived in a little house by the railroad tracks up there where Magnolia Street butts right against the railroad tracks.

JJ: That was next to Bituminous Coal [I was wrong about the name. It was called the Bituminous Service Company.] ...

JH: Just this side of it. Bituminous Oil Company. There was never anything to do with coal, as far as I can remember.

JJ: That was the company that leaked oil into Goose Creek that led to the fire. They [S&A] told me the story about the fire, and I realized that must have been the biggest thing that ever happened in Riggstown.

JH: Oh, it was big. ... There's one other family that you're going to run into a lot, and there's still one member living in this neighborhood. [That's the] Smileys.

JJ: They were related to the Townsends, weren't they?

JH: That house ... [counts houses on East Nields Street] ... Anne Gincley's house is 502, Aunt Mabel's house was 500, Wacky's was 400, Honey's [Hamilton] was 504, so the Smileys had 506, the last house up on that side of the street.

JJ: Right next to Smitty's garage? [508 East Nields Street]

JH: That old garage was Fil Smiley's garage. That was all part of that property. Fillmore Smiley worked as a machinist at the tag factory, and he built that garage to work on automobiles on the side. He was kind of a handyman. ... He had a whole bunch of daughters and one son. And the Lang's back here [gestured towards 544 South Adams Street], Nancy Lang's mother was Anne Smiley. I could name most of the Smiley's but then you're going to run into some nicknames there too. Ann and Mag were the two oldest. Mag, that was Martha, and Ann, ... her daughter is married to Charlie Lang, right around the corner [544 South Adams Street]. There's a lot of Smileys around and some of them are well-known.

JJ: Who's the one that is still around?

JH: Charlie Lang's wife ... what is her name? She goes by Nancy, but that's not her real name [Mary Ellen, from Percolini interview].

JJ: [checking my list of property owners] They bought the house [544 South Adams Street] from John Regan.

CH: John Regan [corrected my pronunciation: "Ray-gen"]. That's where they lived.

JH: She was John Regan's daughter. Johnnie Regan was married to Ann Smiley. Now you're getting into your first railroader.

JJ: That's why I know that name, because I saw it [John Regan] listed in a railroad connection.

JH: He was the only one who went to work in a white shirt. He was something in the signal corps, I don't know exactly what it was.

JJ: So Ann Smiley was Fillmore Smiley's daughter. Do you remember Fillmore's wife's name?

JH: Mary. And she was about as Irish as you could get. They were all related.

[discussion about contacting Aunt Mabel or Nancy Lang, each of whom would know more about the Smiley family]

JJ: Here's another name--the Wallace family.

JH: They lived right across the street, at 435 [ East Nields Street]. That house changed hands several times.

CH: The last one to hold it was Timmy, and he sold it to the people who have it now.

JH: J. McIntyre.

JJ: That's one of the owners of James Realty.

JH: Yes, but that was a family affair too. Ann McIntyre married Wallace.

CH: Timothy Wallace must have gotten it from his parents.

JJ: My list has an earlier name, Walter Painter.

JH: The Painter name is familiar, but I can't remember. It's the same way with grandpop's house. When I was a baby, he already owned it. Up in the top of the barn, somebody carved the name Martin on the door frame. Whether it was an owner or a renter, I don't know, but that name was up there in a couple different places.

JJ: [new subject] This neighborhood was called Riggtown, and I saw something in the newspaper about Barryville. Have you ever heard of that before? [heads shake negative]. I guessed it was some newspaper writer being clever. What he was talking about was the houses on Franklin Street, built by Patrick J. Barry.

JH: Before I forget about it, let me get an envelope from upstairs.

[tape stops while H got envelope with newspaper clippings about Riggtown Terriers and Mifflin Rigg]

JJ: ... so Bud Singer used to live over at 535 South Franklin Street, and Lester Quillen ... you called him "Lep" ... used to live at the corner of Lacy and Matlack.

JH: They had a little grocery store. There was two grocery stores on the corner, and there was two grocery stores up on this corner [gestures towards Matlack & East Niels Street]. Leb Brown and ... [discussion about the other store's name] ... it changed hands several times before Giuntas got there.

JJ: Sidy said something about the "Eagle Store" but I couldn't tell if she meant "eagle" or some other word like "iggle."

JH: We had a guy in the neighborhood who was nicknamed Eagle, but I don't think he was ever in the grocery business. That was Eagle Reilly.

JJ: What do you remember about Howard Malin? Howie? [from 1926 newspaper clipping about the Riggtown Terriers]

JH: Well, that was Tots Malin's younger brother. They lived over on Matlack Street. They were both into sports.

JJ: Do you remember what their dad's name was, or what he did?

JH: No I don't. I remember the boys, but I don't remember him.

JJ: I turned up a John Malin, either their dad or their grandfather, supervised the Irish work crew that filled in East Niels Street and South Franklin Street down to Linden.

JH: [smiling] That was before my time.

JJ: I guess so. The people that we've been studying [in the death records for 1893-1899] would have been from your grandfather Alonzo's generation, or the oldest people that you can remember when you were a little kid. Who else can you remember who was old when you were little?

JH: There used to be a grocery store over on that corner ... Ike Snyder ...

JJ: Across from Quillen's? [Matlack & Lacey]

JH: On the northwest corner. Grandmom's brother used to work for him. [Her brother's name was] Bill Huber. Bill Huber worked for Ike Snyder over at the grocery store. His son Jesse ran for mayor of West Chester a couple of years ago and got beat out.

JJ: I know the name Huber from the church where I grew up. It was a Lutheran Church.

JH: I was baptized Lutheran, over there on High & Lacey, in the building [that is now known as] the New Century Club. Our church used to hold services in there.

JJ: Our church started out in a store too. Now, this is interesting because I would have thought that with so many Irish in this neighborhood, they would all have been Irish and Catholic.

JH: There were a lot of Catholics at this end of town. The Smileys were Catholic.

JJ: [discussion of records at St. Agnes Catholic Church] But I guess they won't do me much good with the Harveys and Gincleys.

JH: [laughing] They went to just about every church imaginable somewhere along the line. [new subject] In fact, when Reds Gincley first came around, there was a kind of a

mystery. He had a half-brother, Frances Ryan, Pat Ryan's father. Somebody said that the Gincleys were gypsies and they just wandered in here. I'll tell you something though ... check phonebooks. I got in the habit, while I was in the service, of looking for the name of Gincley. I never found it anywhere except right here.

JJ: I noticed Gincleys down on Oakbourne Road ...

JH: Same family. Every one of the Gincleys you find in the local phonebook is from that same family, and if you go ten miles away from here, you can't find the name Gincley.

JJ: The trouble is, you can't do that with the name Harvey.

JH: No, you can't. [laughter, discussion of Alonzo's relatives in Media, Harvey Road just below Dilworthtown (not Wilmington)]

JJ: [new subject] When you were a kid, and this goes for both of you, what did kids do to have fun?

JH: [We] sure didn't watch television. If you had a bicycle, you spent a lot of time on it. I had a bicycle. I wasn't much for playing ball. I wasn't big enough, and strong enough and fast enough to play with the other guys, but give me a fishing pole and a bicycle and I was gone. I would either go fishing, or in the fall of the year go trapping ...

JJ: Did you fish in Goose Creek?

JH: There was never any fish in there, but there used to be muskrats in there.

JJ: Did you ever trap them?

JH: Oh yeah! I still do. [discussion of legal issues, fur dealers. Jack has a lifetime fur taker license.]

JJ: Back to the games that you played as kids, when I was growing up, we used to play army. Did you ever play army.

JH: No, we never played that. There is something that comes to mind. We used to play "Jump Creek." The stream that runs down here [Goose Creek] used to be wide open and there were no houses up next to it. We used to get bamboo poles or we'd steal somebody's clothes prop, and use it to jump the creek, like pole- vaulting. We'd go up to Kaufmann's furniture store on Gay Street and get those bamboo poles that

used to come in the middle of [rolled-up] rugs. We'd get those bamboo poles and jump creek [pronounced "crik"] with it. We did a lot of that.

JJ: It sounds like the boys used to play together and the girls used to play together.

CH: Um. [affirmative]

JH: Shooting marbles. We used to shoot a lot of marbles around here. Old Rabbit Thompson was pretty good at it.

JJ: [new subject] I asked you about Barryville. Have you ever heard of Georgetown?

Both: Yes.

JJ: Where was that [located]?

JH: Straight across the tracks. It was the colored district. Everything on that [gestured east] side of the railroad tracks was Georgetown.

JJ: How come they called it Georgetown?

JH: I don't know where they got the name, but that's what they called it, even when I was a kid.

JJ: Did any other parts of town have names like that?

JH: North, northwest of town, there was Little Italy. All that north end of town.

JJ: When I walk around this town, I see High Street was the business street. Walnut Street was the "nice houses" street. Matlack Street, you're coming down hill ...

JH: That was blue collar workers.

CH: I used to work ... I was the head waitress at the Oriole Tearoom, up there on Walnut Street. [discussion about location, pull out the map] The Oriole Tearoom was between East Nields Street & Linden Street. It was a well-known tearoom in West Chester at the time.

JH: Like the Exchange Club and places like that.

CH: It was a business place, and then you could go in there and eat too. It was open most nights as well.

JJ: How long did you work there?

CH: I worked there for years. I can't remember exactly what year it was when I started there.

JH: I can tell you that beer was 35¢ a quart. If she made enough tips, she'd stop and buy me a quart of beer on the way home.

JJ: Where was the taproom? Up by Jake's Bar?

CH: Yes.

JJ: You mentioned before that Reds [Gincley] and Big Jum did some drinking. Is that where they would have gone?

JH: They were before that time. They would have drunk bootleg whiskey. In fact, we had a little bit of bootlegging done right here "in the hollow." Ben Holston used to make what they called "bathtub gin" right over there in that house [gestured towards 386 East Nields Street].

JJ: Did he sell it around here? What did he charge for it?

JH: I don't know. I wasn't old enough to drink or else I'd have probably tried it. [laughter]

CH: He probably sold it cheap, because people didn't have much money.

[tape stops and restarts]

JJ: I wonder why there were never any corner stores down in this neighborhood.

CH: There wasn't any room.

JH: There used to be the two stores up there at the corner [Matlack and East Nields Street], and there was another one up at the next corner, on the southeast corner.

JJ: Do you remember the name?

JH: No I don't. That's where Uncle Jumbo got his nickname. They used to stop in that store on the way to school in the morning, and there was some kind of candy bar named Jumbo. That was the only kind of thing he would buy, and the other kids nicknamed him Jumbo.

JJ: And Little Jumbo was his nephew.

JH: His name was Earl Gincley.

JJ: And he's the one who lived over next to where Anne and Charles lived? [Gincley, 502 East Niels Street]

CH: Aunt Mabel lived there. [500 East Niels Street, wife of Big Jum, Earl Harvey, Jack Harvey's and Sidy's uncle].

JH: You're talking about my cousin Jum [not his Uncle Jum]. He never lived over there [500 East Niels Street]. He was born and raised over at 390 [ East Niels Street], and when he got married, he moved away. He was one of the first of the Gincley's to pass away--he got killed in an accident.

[discussion of 1956 bread truck accident]

JH: He was a hustler. He was working three jobs. ... I think he was driving a bread truck when he got killed. He and a load of milk went head-to-head over near Kennett Square.

JJ: [new subject] Smoking cigarettes ... ?

JH: I didn't smoke until I was about eighteen years old.

JJ: That's the question. At what age did boys start smoking?

JH: I was about eighteen when I started.

JJ: Was that normal?

JH: No, most of them started a lot younger than me.

JJ: [Because] when you mentioned the Goose Creek fire and said it had something to do with smoking cigarettes, I wondered how old people were when they did that?

JH: [laughing] Jack Gibson was with a gang up on the bridge when that fire started.

JJ: You weren't there?

JH: No, I was over at the playground at the Demonstration School. [serious] I saw smoke and I headed this way. It burned all night. They had to send to Philadelphia to get chemicals to put it out. An oil fire, putting water on it just made it flare up.

JJ: And you said [in an earlier, unrecorded conversation] that there was some guy on Lacy Street who had a heart attack?

JH: He lived up on Matlack Street. That was old Sam [sounds like] Heaps [may be spelled "Heepes" or "Heapes"].

CH: The name sounds familiar ...

JH: You weren't around here then. I had a car when I was 16, and I was on a bicycle during that fire, just before I was sixteen [so the fire must have taken place about 1934].

JJ: How did you get a car when you were 16?

JH: My grandfather worked for Jack Garrett in a harness shop, and all the people connected with the dairy industry used to go there. There was a man who was a dairy tester ... he used to go from farm to farm all over the county testing dairy cattle. His name [sounds like] "Hutz" Pearl. He moved to Wisconsin, and he had two cars, a Pontiac and an old Ford Model A coupe. My grandpop bought the Ford off of him for ten dollars, for me.

JJ: For ten dollars? How long did it last?

JH: It did all right, until I hit the police car with it. [laughter] Hutz moved to Wisconsin, and he signed the title in the wrong place. We had the car, we had a title, and we couldn't buy a license. So a friend of mine ... a family lived there on Franklin Street, [sounds like] McKoons. They had a daughter, and her boyfriend used to come down every weekend from Philadelphia. He busted up a car and he had a license that he left on the back porch over there. Well, somehow or other [laughter], I don't know how it wound up on that old Ford, but it did. Now, I worked at the nursery and I drove back and forth to work, but I stayed off of the main roads. I was on the way home from work one Friday night ... it was payday. A fellow named Charlie Broadbelt, who used to ride with me, and another old fellow had to get to the post office. I could come that way, I could come down Matlack Street, and he wanted to know if I could take him into town so he could get to the post office before five o'clock. I dropped him off at Matlack and Gay, and came down Matlack Street, and right there at Matlack and Market, West Chester's one and only police car ran right out in front of me. [laughter] My brakes didn't hold. I slid right into the rear end of it, a 1936 Plymouth. The first car he had and I stopped him! [more laughter] Grandpop was upset and I was upset. They put me in jail! [because he didn't have the legal paperwork on his car] They eventually got it all ironed out, but I'd like to have the paper that they wrote on me. At the time when the police station was on High Street in West Chester, right across the

street was the old car barn, the trolley barn. Then somebody took it over as a garage. That's where they towed my old car. They wouldn't give me my car back until I got things all straightened out.

JJ: [question about location of car barn on High Street (present- day parking lot at 10-20 South High Street, and train station on Matlack Street near Market.) You said you were working at a nursery. Which one?

JH: Hoopes Brothers and Thomas. It was on the land that is now Henderson High. [I described what I learned about the company in 1995.] There were several people at this end of town who worked for them.

JJ: You've mentioned work several times. Where did people work?

JH: A lot of them worked in the nurseries, a lot in the tag factories. The canneries came along a little later.

JJ: You said something about the railroad. By the time you were around, was the railroad an easy place to get work?

JH: I don't know [skeptical]. When I was young, people who lived here worked there, but how they got their jobs, I don't know.

JJ: I've found [during my studies] that getting a regular, full- time job at the railroad is a hard thing to do, but there's always some kind of work, loading or unloading ...

JH: It got to be a sort of "family affair." If somebody was working for the railroad, they got somebody else in their family to work there.

JJ: I've seen that a couple of Townsends worked there, a Dougherty or two, a Ryan ...

JH: Doughertys lived in the house next door to me. [385 East Niels Street]

JJ: I saw Agnes's name [Dougherty, 385 East Niels Street] ...

JH: He was married twice.

JJ: Do you remember what his name was?

JH: Howard Dougherty. He had a son [who] they called "Doc" Dougherty. He was one of the first people I ever knew to get his pilot's license. [discussion of children. Doc and Jack were sons by his first wife; Alice was daughter by Agnes]

[tape stops and restarts]

JH: [something about location of the Stancato house on Lacey Street, reaching back along Goose Creek] Stancato's went all the way back, and then Cat McCallin's [property], and then the Lessigs.

JJ: Lessigs? L-E-S-S-I-G? That's an odd name. I knew a guy named Lessig ...

JH: There were a couple of families of Lessigs around here.

JJ: The reason I asked about Stancato ... [explained the March 27, 1929 burglary at Stancato's garage on Lacey Street] ... I wondered if it was just a coincidence, or did Stancato do something to get on the wrong side of the Riggtown boys. [more fumbling noises] Here, let me read you what I've got. [reads notes from article]

JH: It must have been back in the alley. Grandpop used to own four garages in that alley.

JJ: Well then let me drop Stancato and ask you another question about your grandfather. It sounds like he bought a bunch of property around here. How did he make his money?

JH: He was a harness maker.

JJ: And that was a good business to be in?

JH: Apparently it was. There was an awful lot of farmers, and plowing, ... everything was done by horses back then.

JJ: When did he get out of the business?

JH: When he retired, he sold his place back there to J. R. Elkins, and it became the English Saddle Shop.

JJ: That's 541 South Franklin Street?

JH: It's 541 now. It used to be part of 539; it was all one property.

JJ: The earliest name I have for [541 South Franklin Street] is Grace Elkins.

JH: That was Reggie's wife.

JJ: Not his daughter?

JH: No. They never had children. Reggie moved here from England. He moved to Baltimore from England. He bought the whole thing, the house and the saddle shop. It was a stable at the time when grandpop worked there. Reggie made all of the improvements on it.

JJ: When did Alonzo die?

Both: [confusion]

JH: I'm not sure. I can remember when my grandmother died in '33, but I can't remember the year grandpop died. [more discussion] It's carved in stone out at Greenmount [cemetery], but I don't remember what year it was.

JJ: [verify Jack Harvey Jr's marriage to Martha Louise King in 1966] On one of these deeds, I saw his name. Was it for the house next door?

JH: Lou Brennon lived in that house [431 East Niels Street] for a good many years, he and Sue Brennon. They never had any children, and he kinda took Jack under his wing. He willed that house to Jack.

JJ: But Brennon was no relation? They just got friendly?

CH: Just from living here with us.

JH: Lou Brennon was originally from Moss Point, Mississippi [between Pascagoula and Biloxi on I-10]. He was a Navy man, and when he got out of the Navy, he married a girl from [New] Jersey, Sue, and they bought this house over here. [They were] good neighbors, nice people.

JJ: How come they came to West Chester?

JH: I don't know.

CH: He worked in Philadelphia.

JH: At the time, the Navy ships were mostly fired by steam, and that was Lou's job. When he got out, he took a job with the Philadelphia Gas and Electric Company. He ran the steam plant up on Chestnut Street.

JJ: [discussion about PECO removal of gas tanks at E. Miner Street]

JH: I'll tell you who used to work there for years and years. He used to live right on this hill [gestured towards Matlack Street]. His son is still living here in West Chester,

it was Patrick Morley. He lived up on the hill, the last house on the left, just before you get to Jake's parking lot (220 East Niels Street, next to the alley). Pat Morley moved to this country from Ireland. His wife moved to this country from Ireland. They came from the same town in Ireland and met over here! [laughter]

JJ: What can you tell me about the house right across the street, next to the alley [241 East Niels Street]?

JH: Sam Linton used to live there when I was a kid. Who was there before that, I can't remember.

JJ: [new subject] The other day, your son said something about how, if you wanted to date a girl from Riggtown, it had to be okay with her brothers.

JH: [smiling] You could get in an argument. They'd challenge 'em and run 'em the hell out of Riggtown.

JJ: Can you remember anybody specific? [silence] Well, what did the girls think about it?

JH: I don't remember that. [laughter] I never chased anybody out on that score, but they claimed that before my time, it was even rougher. This whole end of town was like one big clique. You cut one person down here and the whole end of town bled, and you'd better get movin' [out of here before they caught up with you]. There was no fooling. There were people here who liked fighting. Knuckles Holston was one of them.

CH: They never hurt anyone enough to put them in the hospital.

JH: No, but if you lost, you got thrown in Goose Creek. [laughter, then more seriously] We never heard of anybody getting knifed, or anything like that. Everybody believed in fair knuckle fighting.

CH: No guns, no knives. Not like today. Today, you say "boo" to somebody and they want to kill you.

JH: Knuckles was well known. He was in a couple of fights every week. He was tough. Knuckles couldn't fight very good, but he was so damn hard you couldn't hurt him. He had more nicknames than usual. What did they call him ... Mileaway ... Mileaway Holston.

JJ: Why was that?

JH: Ab [sounds like] Glisson, the chief of police at the time, he and Knuckles got into something, I don't remember what it was. He arrested Knuckles and had him at the police station. Ab was investigating him, and charging him with something, and Knuckles told him, [raises voice] "I couldn't have done it because I was a mile away when that happened." [laughter] So ten minutes later when they had to call him in, they called "Come on in here, Mileaway!" It stuck, and everyone used to call him Mileaway Holston.

JJ: You just said that he got arrested, and you mentioned that you got in trouble over that car and wound up spending some time in jail. Was that pretty normal? Did most people get in trouble some time?

JH: It wasn't unusual.

CH: The way I understood it, back in those days, if you beat up somebody bad enough, and they called the police, you spent the night in jail. It wasn't like nowadays, when you get beat up and go home and talk about how you're going to get them back. If you got somebody beat up bad enough that the police were called, you spent the night in jail.

JH: You didn't go to the jail, you went to the police lockup. It was a holding cell, right in the police station.

JJ: Before, when I mentioned the name of the Burgess, George Brinton, you gave me a look like you knew who he was. Did everybody get to know who the police were?

JH: Everybody got to know who the Burgess was. It wasn't a big town, and it wasn't as formal as it is today. Everybody got to know all the cops by name. They had foot patrols, and I screwed up the only car. [laughter] The first colored cop in West Chester was named Dick Dorsey, and Dick used to patrol this neighborhood. That was rare for a colored person to get to walk around here.

JJ: Did he have much trouble, or was being a policeman enough?

JH: Well, I got to know him and like him. Grandpop had a big old radio when we lived over at 539 South Franklin, and I think the radio's named was ... I think it was a "Howard." It was the biggest radio at this end of town. There was a program that the cop liked to listen to, "Rubinoff and his Violin." Rubinoff came on shortly ... I think it was the next program after Amos and Andy. I don't remember what year it was, but Dick Dorsey used to come knock on the front door, and grandmom would ask him if his shoes were clean. She would make him take off his shoes outside. If it was wet

weather, he would have to take his shoes off. The sidewalk over there wasn't concrete, it was wood, and we'd have to scrub it every week, on our hands and knees.

JJ: This was all before World War II, wasn't it?

JH: Oh yes. Grandmom died in 1933. She used to scrub all of that boardwalk, and remember, we had sidewalk out front on the street, and all the way around the side clean to the back alley.

JJ: At that time, was the street still oyster shells?

JH: Yes, it was still oyster shells. Mud and oysters.

JJ: [new subject] [Mifflin] Rigg built all the houses on this side of the street, but the Braunstein's from Philadelphia built the houses across the street. They bought the property from the Careys. Do you remember any Careys?

JH: Bill Carey. He built the first two houses on the block.

JJ: It looks like all of these houses got built in the 1890s to 1900, and at the beginning at least, they were built by a bunch of outsiders who rented them out.

JH: Somewhere in the house, I've got another letter that Tom Thomson wrote me, that says these houses were built around 1894 and people started moving in to them by 1895.

JJ: For some of them, they had the houses rented before they were even built, because there was such a shortage of housing in the 1890s.

JH: I think they rented for around 10-12 dollars per month.

[discussion of the cost to build a house (\$1500)]

JH: Keggs over here [gestured towards cabinet shop at the corner of East Niels Street and South Franklin Street] ... I don't know where Ted gets his information, but Ted seems to know a lot about where a lot of the lumber came from. The lumber came from buildings that were torn down somewhere else, and the lumber was used up here. I can show you examples around here. A lot of these door frames, instead of one piece of wood, they used two.

[Jack indicated the frame of the door leading from his kitchen to the back porch.]

CH: This kitchen cabinet is made of the same type of wood.

JH: People by the name of Boyle tore this out [gestured towards opening between dining area and living room] ... Jack Boyle built this.

JJ: Well, that leads to a question I asked Siddy Stanley. If the families had ten kids and two parents in a house like this, where did everybody sleep?

JH: The beds were a kind of "multiple deal." [laughter]

CH: Two and three in a bed. At that time, I don't think they even had bunk beds. We had three kids sleeping in one bed at home, and I was from a large family. My mother had twelve kids, and we slept three to a bed.

JJ: Then would people have all of their bedrooms upstairs, or did they have some people sleep downstairs?

CH: We didn't in my house. Everybody had to go upstairs to go to bed.

JH: These houses were originally three bedroom but ...

[discussion and visit upstairs to see renovations. The upstairs bedroom at 387 East Niels Street had an 8.5 foot high ceiling, higher than the ceiling at 392 East Niels Street. C mentioned that the Brice's did some remodeling at 392 East Niels Street before they sold it to Jones, perhaps involving a baby room.]

Both: [They still had the original bath tub in their bathroom, and said they liked soaking in the tub. JJ: I'll bet that was one of the most pleasurable things one could do in Riggtown after a long day at a hard job.]

JH: [new subject] There's a single house around the corner (544 South Adams Street) where Nancy Lang lives now. Have you ever run into the name Dean? Old Granny Dean ... a great big old high board fence used to be around the property ... and her son Ozzie, we used to call him Gunga Din, he used to travel around with us at one time. Granny Dean had a parrot and she used to put it out in the backyard. We were ornery kids, and we tried to get the parrot to say things that she didn't want it to say.

JJ: Did you know somebody named Green that used to live around here?

JH: Oh yes, there was Dude Green, Harold Green, ... there was a family. I'm not sure where they lived, whether it was over there in that corner house (385 East Niels Street) or not, but there was two brothers, Dude and Harold. They were athletes.

JJ: I saw their name in the newspaper clipping about the Riggtown Terriers.

JJ: [new subject] I am interested in learning whether poor people were as healthy as rich people, and I can see that this neighborhood didn't have any rich people. Were people healthy here? What kind of diseases did kids get?

JH: I can't really remember. Grandpop was almost ninety when he died, and a lot of them were up around that age [when they died]. Grandmom was only in her sixties when she died, but mother was almost nineties.

JJ: It sounds like, at least by the time of your generation, this [neighborhood] is not any less healthy than anywhere else. I wonder if it was any less healthy in the early years, after they filled on over the landfill, but there were still mosquitoes and rats. I imagine it must have been less healthy here than over on Church Street.

JH: I can still picture how it used to be back there [Greenfield Park]. There was a ball diamond and the backstop used to be right over there behind Liz's house [386 East Nields Street].

CH: The outfield was all marsh. I can remember that.

JH: All the way back at the lower end of the property towards the railroad; that was a big swamp. It was full of muskrats and a little bit of everything. It was the greatest place in the world for hunting snakes.

JJ: Did you ever go shooting back there?

JH: Oh yes. The best shot in this whole area was Eagle Reilly. Reilly's farm was right across the tracks.

JJ: I have seen it on the map of West Chester.

JH: Well, there was quite a few of the Reillys, and old Jim Reilly had the farm. There was no place around here to play football, so we used to go over on the farm. But you had to be careful not to get tackled where a cow had been. [laughter]

JJ: What do you remember about the marsh and the landfill?

JH: That land was donated to the borough by a realtor, Taylor. He lived over in Miltown.

JJ: He put a condition on the donation that the city name the park after the Greenfield family. Do you have any idea who the Greenfields were?

JH: I have no idea. It was a Harry Taylor [who donated the land] ...

JJ: Harry Taylor owned the land behind the Esco Cabinet Company ...

JH: I used to work there.

JJ: You worked there too? So did Charlie Gincley. When did you work there?

JH: Let's see ... it was before I had a car. Back then, we used to unload boxcars up there. Big bales of insulation, sheets of steel, plywood, whatever they used to build those great big milk coolers. When they milked a cow, each one [of the coolers] used to hold 44 milk cans to keep them cool.

JJ: Tell me in order what jobs you had.

JH: My first job, when I was a kid, was mowing grass. I worked for Lasko, where she worked [C], Lasko Metal Products ... I worked in a mushroom plant down in Delaware. I worked with Jim Stanley, that was Sid's husband; Jerry Davis; Frank Del Rossi, who lived on the corner at the time [386 East Niels Street]. We worked together down in Delaware, filling mushroom houses. We'd drive down in the car together, and we got so many hours [of wages] for filling a house. The houses were built in tiers and we had to fill them. They didn't have any conveyors like they do now. All we had was a cart that rolled on tracks made out of a pair of angle irons turned upside down, and we'd put a big plank on it and set boxes of mushroom soil on it and push it along. Then we'd have to hand them up.

JJ: So you had to be a team to do this?

JH: Yes, it was definitely teamwork.

JJ: Did you have a boss?

JH: Yes, there was a boss there. I should remember his name, I knew a couple of them.

JJ: But he wasn't from this neighborhood?

JH: No, we didn't have the boss with us. ... We got ten hours for filling a house. The average wages in those days were around 25 cents an hour, but if you could fill it in five hours, you still got ten hours. That was \$2.50 for each person per house. You'd fill all the tiers until they were level and smooth, and then you had to tamp them, with a little wooden tool. Then they came along and planted the spores. You had to be Italian, you had to be old, and you had to spit tobacco juice to do that. [laughter] Those guys would go up there with a sharp stick, everyone was different, they each

made their own, ... and they'd go up there and push it in, bend it back to make an opening, drop in the spore [with the other hand] and close it back up. Their hands would be going like this [demonstrates rapid hand movements] all day. Five guys like me couldn't stay up with one of those oldtimers. I tried it, but pheww!

JJ: I ran into that when I was picking grapes over in France. [described trying to keep up with the oldtimers]

JH: Another thing that kids around here used to work at every fall, we'd go to Westtown Orchards. We'd get paid around four or five cents a bushel. You had to put in a hell of a day down there to make a few bucks.

JJ: Did you work off ladders to pick apples?

JH: Some of them. We had a thing we'd hang around our neck to pick apples, and then we'd empty them into baskets [on the ground]. They'd come around at the end of every day to count how many baskets you'd picked.

JJ: You said you'd worked over at Hoopes Brothers and Thomas Nursery too.

JH: That's right. Then by the time I went to Lasko, I had my driver's license then.

JJ: Did you ever work any place long enough to retire?

JH: Schramms. That's where I retired, after 34 years.

JJ: What did you do there?

JH: I finished up working in the welding shop from '55 to '84, when I retired, but I was never a welder. I ran the automatic burring machine, cutting shapes and forms out of steel. We had big "Do-All" power saws, and pipe-threading machines. I made parts for the welders.

JJ: Were you what they call a fabricator?

JH: It was a metal fabrication shop. When I first went out there, I worked at several jobs. I worked in a spray-painting booth, I worked in the machine shop for a while, I worked at several jobs. I worked at a couple of jobs I just couldn't stay with. I worked in the storeroom ... they had a boss that I didn't like, nobody else did either ... Dave Thompson. No relation to any of the Thompsons [on East Nields Street], this guy was from up in Lancaster County.

JJ: [to C] Where did you work?

CH: Where did I work? I started to do housework and baby sitting and knitting in the home ...

JJ: Was this up in Downingtown?

CH: This was in Downingtown. I moved to West Chester for my first job in West Chester, babysitting for Poliner. He and his father had a tailor shop, and I was the babysitter. I lived at their house. After that, I went to another family and moved up the line, for more money and better ...

JJ: How old were you when you started working for Poliners?

CH: When I did that, I was about sixteen. After I left that, I went to [can't make out the name; sounds like "Sarajeva"]. I went with him, and in the meantime, I learned to be a waitress. I became the head waitress over at the Oriole Tearoom for years. I worked at the Downingtown Diner where they made THE MOVIE ...

JJ: Which movie?

Both: The Blob!

JJ: That science fiction movie?

CH: That's right! I worked in that diner before they made the movie. And then when I moved over here [to Riggtown], I went to work part time at the Tearoom for, oh, I don't know, just to give me a little bit of spending money that we couldn't afford otherwise. I got to be head waitress there. Then I left waitress work and went out to Lasko Metal, and I stayed there until I retired.

JJ: Did you guys work at Lasko at the same time?

Both: No.

JH: I was there before her.

CH: During the war, I worked as a welder at Lukenweld [part of Lukens Steel?]. I also left there ... because of a dispute, and I went to what we called the Plush Company ... Collins and Aikman, at [sounds like] Bondsville. I worked there making plush for cars [the covering that goes on seats].

JJ: What did you weld at Lukens?

CH: I worked there during the war. I would be inside of these big tanks, and anything that was connected with the machinery of war. And I must say I was a pretty good welder, and I was small enough to fit inside the little tanks. That was one of my advantages over some of the other people, because I could fit into the tanks, and they couldn't. But I enjoyed it very much, I really did. After that, we came over here and I went to the Tearoom. then after the kids were grown up, I went over to Laskos, and that's where I retired from.

JJ: What did you do at Laskos?

CH: At Laskos, we were making window fans and regular fans ... anything connected with air. We also made toasters. When the [Korean] war came on, we were making what we called "caskets." They were bomb holders ...

JH: [They were] rocket holders that got mounted under the wings of planes, so you can put the rockets in.

CH: We called them caskets. Then when we got finished, we would go back to the fan department again. That's where I retired from.

JJ: You can probably answer a question, not about Riggtown, but about Downingtown. In the records, I've found mention of an East xWard of Downingtown that was separate from the rest of the town.

CH: East Ward Town was at the lower end of Downingtown, in other words, as you're going towards Exton. The other end towards Coatesville was Downingtown. The dividing line was at the middle of town, right there at the traffic light with the two banks on the corner [intersection of US322 and US30-Business]. The one bank on the one corner was always there, from the time I was a little tiny baby, because I lived right on Brandywine Avenue. We lived in the house by the railroad tracks, where the lumber yard is now, we used to have an immense house up there. That's where we lived when I was eight or nine years old.

JJ: Did your family own this house or rent it?

CH: My mommy and daddy rented it. Originally, they lived up in Johnsontown, somewhere close to where the Italian Club is now.

JJ: Johnsontown?

CH: That was in Downingtown. It was the Italian section in Downingtown. It was in between the church and the ... I call it the viaduct, where the railroad cars went. Then

we moved from there down to Brandywine Avenue. And then from Brandywine Avenue, we moved to Glen Moore. That's where I was living when I married him.

JJ: How did you guys meet?

JH: [laughter] My cousin, Harvey Gincley! I was riding around on a warm summer night. I had a real nice little Chevy coupe ...

CH: I had to babysit.

JH: ... I was hell for cars. I would spend more time polishing and cleaning. I kept cars nice, and I was cruising around, didn't know really what I was looking for, when Harvey flagged me down up on Walnut and Gay. There was an ice cream store up there at the time, I think it was called McMinns, and Harv flagged me down and wanted to know what I was doing. [I told him] "Hell, I'm just riding around." [He said] "I've got a couple of girls who want to go swimming." [I said] "Okay, let's go swimming." [laughter]

JJ: Where did you go? Down at the quarry [west of town on PA842]?

JH: No, we went up to Valley Creek, up there by the railroad tunnel. Just this side of the tunnel, there used to be a real nice place [to go swimming].

JJ: There was the two of you ... was there another girl went along?

JH: [after some discussion] Margie Hall.

CH: She was babysitting, she was in the same kind of work, and we girls would all get the kids together and go to the park to let them play. I was a live-in babysitter and I lived with the kids I was taking care of. She didn't. She lived on Gay Street up in the apartments some place. There used to be roughly five of us who got together, and took the kids to the park together. The five of us did a lot of running around together.

JJ: This was all before World War II. How long did you two go together before you got married?

CH: Oh dear, it wasn't very long.

JH: It wasn't very long. I married her when she was only seventeen. We got married in 1942.

CH: January the ninth, 1942.

JJ: When did you start getting called Blondie?

CH: Since I was a child. My hair was the color of sunshine. In fact, a lot of my sisters even had blond hair. We all really had light hair. Mine was really blond.

JJ: It must be the German blood.

CH: Yes, my grandmother was German. My mother's maiden name was Jordan. And of course, my maiden name was Baum.

JJ: Jack Junior was your first child. What year was he born?

CH: 1944.

JJ: So then it was after the war. You were gone for a couple of years in the service and I guess that couldn't have been too good for your marriage.

JH: It wasn't. In fact, we got divorced and remarried.

JJ: I'm glad you said that, because I saw the divorce ...

CH: [mocking tone] I said to him, go ahead, I'll let you get your divorce, but you're going to come back.

JH: I was in the islands when the divorce papers came through.

JJ: Now that makes sense. You said you [JH] didn't get back until 1946, and I saw that the divorce was in June 1945. When did you get remarried?

CH: 1948.

JJ: [smiling] I guess it was a good move [since you seem to get along together well after all these years].

CH: [smiling] Yes, I'd say it was. I just had this feeling ...

JH: I felt sorry for her, nobody else would have her [laughing].

CH: No he didn't. I said to him, I'll give you your divorce, but you'll come back, and we've been married ever since [48 years at the time of the interview]. We have our normal ups and downs, but I think we've done pretty well. I think we watch out for each other.

[discussion of marriage, youth, hard work]

JJ: When you got married and lived in the neighborhood, with all of your family around you, did the family ever put pressure on you [to stay together]?

CH: I don't think so. [in measured syllables] I can remember my mother, she was a "Dutch" woman to the very end. I remember when I got divorced, and I told her I was going to marry Jack again, she told me "you're gonna get kicked out of there. He's going to beat you up." And I kept saying "no mom, he's not gonna hit me." He hit me one time in my life and he never hit me again.

JJ: And that of course will not ever show up in anything that I write.

[discussion of what makes a good marriage]

JJ: How many children did you have?

CH: I had two. Actually, I would have had three, but I had a miscarriage.

JJ: What is your second child's name?

JH: Dick. Richard Joseph. He lives up near Boyertown, at New Berlinville.

[discussion of childhood medical problems]

CH: He joined the Boy Scouts and that taught him to get along with other kids who didn't call him names.

JH: He became the assistant scout master.

CH: He went to the jamborees ... and Junior, he was just [emphasis] Junior. He was a typical [emphasis] boy. He grew up just fine.

JH: Grandpop took a liking to Dick, and half the times that we couldn't find him, grandpop had him. Lou Brennon over there had Jack. Half the time, we didn't know where the kids were. [laughter]

[discussion turned back to the Harvey family tree]

JH: Uncle Mike didn't have any kids; Jum (Earl Harvey) and Mabel had three.

CH: Remember that grandpop lived here, we lived here, mom lived up there, aunt Mabel lived over here, Aunt Helen lived here, ...

JH: ... Yoppy and Betty lived up the street ...

CH: ... so almost the whole neighborhood were descendants of the Harvey family. Alonzo was the "father" of the neighborhood.

JJ: I'm going to look up some additional information on his harness shop.

JH: When I was a kid, he worked up on Gay Street for Jack Garrett. Jack Garrett had a harness shop, right next to Poliner's clothing store in the middle of the block between High and Walnut [Streets]. Later, he moved over to High Street below Union.

JJ: [referring to 1933 map of West Chester] Have you ever heard of a man named Wertz?

JH: Bill Wertz? The masonry contractor?

JJ: He had a place over on Lacey Street, where the Public Works Department parks their vehicles nowadays.

JH: There was Joe Wertz too. He had a place over on Barnard Street.

JJ: How about Doran?

JH: Oh, the block man up here [gestured towards the railroad tracks]. You know where the day care center is? That was originally a block plant. John Doran had the block plant up there, and then one of the guys who worked for him, or with him, Ruggieri took it over after John Doran got out of it. John Doran's son is still living.

JJ: Was that Lawrence Doran?

JH: No, that was his brother [Lawrence was John's brother]. Young John Doran lives down at Oakbourne Road. Jack Doran [is what people call him.]

JJ: That's down near some Gincleys, isn't it? How come Oakbourne Road [was so popular] for house-building?

JH: I don't know. Robert was the first. Then Jum and Betty, and Kip. Bob had one on this side of the road, and then he built a new house on the opposite side of the road. Then Jum built a house down there ... there was about three or four of them. Kip's still there, and Betty, Jum's widow, married a guy from Phoenixville or Mont Clare named Joe Frisco. They're still in the house that Jum built.

JJ: Sidy said that she and Jim built one, but never lived in it. They sold it instead.

JH: They built up on the other end of town.

JJ: Up by Mayfield Court? She talked about it.

[end side 2 of tape]

Jack & Charlotte Harvey, interview by Jim Jones (September 14, 1996).

This morning, I went over to the Harvey's house to ask the following questions:

1. What was the "Riggtown spirit?" 2. Did Riggowners support any particular political party? 3. Were there any important labor strikes in Riggtown history? 4. What role did unions play in Riggowner lives?

Charlotte provided the best answer to the first question about Riggtown spirit. She said that Riggtown was the "kind of place where people watched out for each other." She offered as an example what happened when someone got sick--the neighbors would stop over to see what they could do to help, and there was never a case where someone said afterwards, "I wish I had done something to help."

As far as political parties, Charlotte was brought up by strictly Democratic parents, and is registered as a Democrat now, but felt that she couldn't be an unquestioning Democrat like her parents, since it is so much harder these days to figure out who a candidate really is. She tries to read up on the candidates, and if the Republicans have a good one, she votes for him/her. She remembered that in her first presidential election, she voted for Roosevelt. We calculated that this must have been in 1944.

Jack was brought up in a staunchly Republican family, because his grandfather Alonzo had no use for the Democrats. But Jack said that after he got older, he started to vote for some Democrats, even though he is registered Republican. He voted for Roosevelt at least once, but wasn't sure if it was in 1940 or 1944. He voted for two generations of Chambers--both Democrat--who were elected mayor of West Chester.

They thought that for the most part, people in Riggtown did not discuss politics very much, and did not try to convince each other to support any particular candidate. Thus, they did not know whether other Riggowners were Democrat or Republican. However, they thought that most people did vote.

As for strikes, neither could remember anything significant, although Charlotte thought that there might have been a strike at the Grocery Products Co. in the 1960s. As far as unions went, they had some useful stories, and in general, shared a distaste for unions.

Charlotte said that the factory where she worked after the kids grew up (Lasko in the mid-1960s) was unionized by the United Steel Workers. She thought that the union leaders were too close to management, so they did little for the workers. She told about one time when she was injured by a huge roll of plastic bags and laid from work for around 6 months. Although she got \$40/week in disability, neither the union nor

the company wanted to pay her medical bills. She also mentioned (without editorial comment) that the leaders of her union branch were all blacks except one.

In contrast to Lasko, Schramms (where Jack worked) was never unionized. He remembered a meeting at the local VFW post (in the late 1960s, because Charlotte was at Lasko's at the time) when representatives of the United Steel Workers tried to unionize Schramms, but at the meeting, Jack asked why Schramm's workers received more than Lasko's unionized workers for the same job, even after the union had been at Lasko's for twenty years (so it must have begun during WWII). He said that broke up the meeting and Schramms was never unionized.

As far as both of them knew, there was never a union at either Denny or Keystone Tag companies.

I asked Jack whether Schramms ever employed blacks while he was there (based on Mr. Morris' remarks) and Jack said that when he started, there was a single black man named Charles something-or-other who worked in the repair section with Paul Hall and others. Jack thought that he got along fine with everyone else.

Jack retold the story about how he worked at Sunroc at the beginning of WWII when he was only 21 (so it was in 1940) and got in an argument with Orville Morrison. Morrison was an ex-lawyer and the owner's son who came back to be a plant manager. The workers didn't like him, and one day, when he started to yell at one of Jack's colleagues (Jack headed a section, much like a foreman), Jack yelled back and threatened to quit. Since it was wartime, Jack couldn't quit legally, but he simply refused to go back, even for his paycheck, although they eventually mailed his last check to him. Jack heard that Schramm's was busy, so he went over there and got a job at another location, a car place of some sort, where they had a subcontract from Schramms to build searchlight wagons for the military. Jack worked there until he enlisted in 1942.

Finally, they mentioned the Guthrie family (Herbert, wife and two daughters), who lived in the small house at 510 East Nields Street (where the Willow Apartments are located today). Charlotte thought they were a bit standoffish because Herbert Guthrie didn't like kids too much. As she told it, if you lost a ball in Guthrie's yard, you never got it back.

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Jack Harvey, interview by James A. Jones (December 24, 1996).

The Leary family used to keep a race horse (trotter) named "Joe-Boy" in a stable located in the alley between Lacey and East Nields Street, just east of and parallel to Matlack Street. It was a smart horse that would stamp its hoof on the ground to answer questions about how old it was.

Two brothers named Daley (Dick? and Dan?) worked for the railroad in West Chester. They used to take the local kids for rides when switching cars around the West Chester yard.

Jack confirmed Ernest Bayless' story about boys from Riggtown learning to become sharpshooters by target shooting in the marsh. He pulled out two pennies that he had kept since childhood. One had a 22 slug embedded in it--Jack said that the Reilly boy did that one day from a distance of about 25-50 feet.