

Hannah: This is Hannalore Gabriel interviewing Ted Argys. We're doing the interview at his home on 618 G. Street.

Ted: Now.

Hannah: I will start asking you questions now. Thank you for agreeing to do this interview. Today is June 23rd, 2003, no, 24th. Close enough. Where did your parents come from?

Ted: My father originally came from Greece and my mother was born in Leadville, Colorado.

Hannah: What was your father's full name?

Ted: Theodore A. Argys.

[00:01:00]

Hannah: Argys? Is that a shortened form since you said it came from Greece?

Ted: It's shortened. It used to be Argiropoulos, but when they migrated to this country, they shortened it to Argys.

Hannah: Yeah. Could we spell that original spelling of that name?

Ted: Sure. A-R-G-I-R-O-P-O-U-L-O-S.

Hannah: Okay.

Ted: You'll have to talk a little louder. My hearing aid broke.

Hannah: Yes, okay.

Ted: I can hear you pretty good, but ...

Hannah: What year was that when your father came from Greece to the United States?

Ted: I would say he came roughly here in 19 ... Oh, gosh. Let me think. I'd say about 1905.

Hannah: You know why he came here?

[00:02:00]

Ted: He had two brothers living here. The older brother came first, my Uncle Dick. When he accumulated enough money, he send for Uncle Gus to come over. When they got enough money accumulated, they sent for dad. It was nothing back in Greece for them, so they came back here. Uncle Dick had a grocery store and an interest in a garage.

Hannah: Where was that? In Salida?

Ted: To describe it, the garage originally was in the alley between Sackett Avenue and 1st Street, a little shack there of automotive stuff. Later on in life, he took over the Nash International franchise. Uncle Gus went in with him as a mechanic and dad went into the grocery business.

Hannah: What year was that when your uncles had this garage?

Ted: You know, that's something I don't know because I wasn't there, but I'd say they probably started the garage business in 19, maybe '35.
[00:03:00]

Hannah: How old was your dad then?

Ted: Probably twenty-five or somewhere in there. Just a kid.

Hannah: You said your mother is from Leadville.

Ted: Excuse me?

Hannah: Your mother came from Leadville.

Ted: Leadville.

Hannah: Yes.

Ted: And lived in Smelter, Colorado, Smelertown out here by the Smoke Stack. They got married, I don't know when exactly. I was born April 6th, 1921. In 1924, my brother, George was born April 3rd. They lived on 237 Sackett Avenue. They lived there until they both passed away. I should change that, they both ended up in the convalescent home. Dad was about a 100 years old. Mom was eighty-something and they got to the point, we couldn't handle them, so we put them in a convalescent home out here to finish their life out. I think Dad up to ninety-five years old was just as agile as any person you had ever seen. He walked every day; very, very seldom drove a car; knew everybody in town; he had a good personality. Didn't know a stranger. He did well in the grocery business. After I graduated from school in 1938, I went to business with him. I stayed there for eighteen years. Then, Uncle Sam gave me a notice to participate in the festivities.
[00:04:00]

[00:05:00]
Hannah: Let's go back to those earlier years. Tell me a little bit more about your mother.

Ted: Mom was a homebody. The only work she ever done except homework was she helped in the grocery store quite a bit.

Hannah: In her family ... She was born in Leadville, right? Was her family living in Leadville?

Ted: No. Her grandma moved to Salida. Then, they had, let's see, four boys and two girls. I think, to my best of my knowledge, they're all deceased now. They'd be ninety or a hundred years old. I haven't heard from them for a long time, so I don't know.

Hannah: What kind of endeavor were they into? What was your mother's family's business or work?

Ted: [00:06:00] Everyone worked someplace else. Stanley was a clerk. Uncle Frank was a railroader. Victor was a painter. Aunt Josephine was a housewife. Aunt Edith was a housewife. I missed a brother. Tony. Tony died at an early age. They had a good family life. As a matter of fact, I go back a little further. Families in them days were very close. Christmas and all the holidays, we all got together. Sometimes, there'd be thirty to thirty-five of us all going to grandma's house for dinner, having a good time enjoying life. It was a very knit family, very close.

Hannah: What was your mother's maiden name?

Ted: Oh, what the heck was her name? Glovan, Mary Glovan. G-L-O-V-A-N.

Hannah: Do you know what ethnic background that name belongs to?

Ted: [00:07:00] No. Mom's background, I don't know too much. All I know was when she moved from Leadville and got married, living with dad, raising a family, and keeping busy, excellent cook. She could cook anything better than anybody I ever knew. I miss her a lot today. Dad was a good cook, too.

Hannah: What did he like to cook?

Ted: He loved to cook.

Hannah: What did he like to cook?

Ted: Greek stuff.

Hannah: Do you remember anything?

Ted: Mom, she could cook anything you wanted. She was an exceptionally good cook. Any nationality; spaghetti and the Italians or Slovenian stuff, I can't just tell you. Just anything. She is very efficient at cooking.

Hannah: Was it anything that your family raised? Did your mom have a vegetable garden, for example?

Ted: [00:08:00] Dad had an exceptionally nice garden every year. One thing dad always said ... Dad never used commercial fertilizers. He always used cow manure. Had the prettiest lawn you'd ever seen, just velvety. You could stand on it and it would

just sink. Really. I've never seen a lawn like it. Mom, well, mom didn't do much of that. She done the cooking. Dad done the gardening and working in the grocery store.

Hannah: Did they also do any hunting or did you have maybe chickens or some meat source of your own?

Ted: Dad did raise chickens and that was one of the funny parts of my life. Every Saturday or Friday night, I'd have to go out and get a snare. A snare one of the chickens. I'd chopped the neck off and gut it, and feather it, and all that to get it ready for dinner. It wasn't that bad. It's just I hate to see the poor bird die, but we had to eat. Things in them days were rough. This was right around ...

Hannah: Rough in what way?

[00:09:00] Ted: Depression. Shortage of money. I remember the Depression very well because food was scarce. Even with the grocery store, you can't buy groceries if people don't pay their grocery bill and his business was founded on credit. He trusted everybody, but he didn't do bad. People were pretty good with him, very honest. No complaints.

Hannah: During the Depression years that was a problem with credits?

Ted: No, you know, the funny part of the things is a lot of the old friends from back East used to come out here to Colorado to visit during the Depression. They had money. They would marvel at the way that people in this town lived. They didn't have any worries. They just all enjoyed life. They all worked hard. Everybody was everybody's friend. It's different today. Nobody knows anybody.

Hannah: Why do you think that was?

Ted: Excuse me?

Hannah: Why do you think that was?

Ted: I think it's the way they were brought up at home. They learned to appreciate what they got and had. They struggled for ... I mean, dad worked hard all his life for, well, he got out of the grocery store after about sixty years.

[00:10:00]

Hannah: What kind of a guy was he?

Ted: Fantastic. Stubborn, bull-headed, but when he said, "Eat," you sit down at the table, you eat what you had on the plate or you didn't leave the table. You ate slow. You didn't eat fast. You didn't get to run out the house to go to the store or go anywhere until the plate was clean. He was a very, very good father. I tried to raise my kids the same way. They turned out pretty good. Let's see. At one time, I was raised down by the lower park there. There was about ten or fifteen

of us kids. We amused ourselves. We'd go hiking every Saturday. We'd take our lunch and go back up in the hills there and just piddle around all day, to spend the whole day, take our apple and our sandwiches, and water and get up there.

[00:11:00] After a while, we'd all sit down and eat. Do a little more walking and then, come back home. We never got in trouble like they do today. We had to do what we wanted. We had no other enjoyment. We didn't have cars. Bicycles are a rarity. Roller skates are unheard of, I don't think. No skateboards. No nothing. We had to make do. We all learned to swim in the Arkansas River down here. Funny part of the whole story is where we learned to swim was behind the hospital. In them days, when they've done surgery there, everything came in to the sewer and went right behind the hospital. A lot of times, when somebody dive in there, he'd come up with an arm or something they discarded. It was interesting. We never had money. We just ...

Hannah: With an arm, what do you mean? An actual human arm?

Ted:
[00:12:00] Oh, yeah, yeah. They threw all the stuff in like a ... The greater ... the whatchacallit if it didn't chew it up, it'd just go down the river. Them were different days.

Hannah: You also found things like, I don't know, scalpels and what?

Ted: No, no, no.

Hannah: No.

Ted: None of that.

Hannah: Just arms.

Ted: No skeletons. No equipment or nothing like that.

Hannah: Yeah. Did you have toys?

Ted: Any what?

Hannah: Toys?

Ted: Toys in them days were scarce. I remember one particular toy, I always remembered, one Christmas, we went to grandma's the day before Christmas to spend the night with grandma. That morning, they brought me a little fire engine about that long. That was my cherished toy for years because that was the finest toy I ever got.

Hannah: How old were you then?

Ted: Probably six or seven. You asked me to go back a long ways, but you can scratch

[00:13:00] that off. Like I said, we all learned to swim in the river, all fifteen of us. If you go down the big park, there's an old tree right down at the bottom of the park that's hanging out over the ... Unless they tore it up since I've been down there last. We had a big rope and got a tire, and we'd make swing out there, drop in to the water, and swim back in. That's where we learned to ... We had one guy who was a pretty good swimmer. He was an older fellow, but sort of our guardian angel, but nobody ever had any ... We enjoyed life. We played baseball in the park down there. We never had a baseball park. None of the frivolities they have today.

[00:14:00] If we wanted to go play baseball, we went out there where the park is. Today, we'd have to take our wheelbarrows and our rakes, and our shovels and we'd have to rake that whole place up and dump the rocks over the hill where the river is there, so we would have a place to park. Nothing was given to us. We earned it. Down by the river, there was a lettuce shed. They raised a lot of lettuce in Salida years ago. They shipped a lot of lettuce out. The greatest thing we had to do, we'd go down to lettuce shed in the evening and all the culls that they didn't crate up, we'd pick them up and take them, and go door-to-door making money to go to the show.

Hannah: That group of kids, are there any of them still around that you're in contact with?

Ted: Every one of my buddies are gone, except my brother, George. He's still here.

Hannah: He lives in town?

Ted: Yes. George is a plumber, been a plumber for ... He's self-employed. He's been probably thirty, thirty-five years a plumber. Now, he's semi-retired. The old customers call him up and he's glad to accommodate them because they took care of him when he was having to go at it. He appreciated that.

Hannah: Where did you go to school?

[00:15:00] Ted: Grade school was the McCray School. That was down where the post office is now. Junior high was ... Kesner Junior High for the 7th and 8th Grade and Salida High School from then on. I graduated from Salida in '38.

Hannah: At grade school, how many kids were there in your class?

Ted: Probably thirty-five or forty. We never knew. They had to take what they got. They didn't have any room. Sometimes, they'd have to bring a chair or two in for the kids to sit down. The classes weren't big enough, but we all managed. Some failed, some went ahead, some went back.

Hannah: Do you remember any of the teachers?

Ted: My favorite teacher was Mrs. Mitchell. She was my Spanish teacher, a

wonderful teacher. She always talked in Spanish, so you had to no choice. She'd get in the class and she'd say, "Buenos dias." "Buenos dias, senora." It just kept ... All the class was conducted in Spanish, and you learn. You have no choice.

[00:16:00] Mrs. Holtorf, she was a partial math teacher. She had done a very good job teaching math. Mrs. Hoddle, she was the principal. Oh, golly. You're bringing ... going back a long ways. Mrs. Rogers was the English teacher. Mrs. Mosgrove was the junior high English teacher. I hated school. One of my problem was ...

Hannah: Why did you hate school?

Ted: I started when I was five years old. Theoretically, I was a year behind the rest of them in knowledge because I couldn't keep up with them. I had a heck of a time trying to keep up with guys that were ... If I was five, they were six and seven. Some of them are eight or nine. The farmers boys come in and finally get to come to school, they'd be eight or nine years old. Their mentality is a little, you know, than a five-year-old kid. There's a lot of difference.

[00:17:00]

Hannah: Why are these kids coming in at a later age?

Ted: Working on the farms and stuff, and they didn't get to come to school. The farm comes first with the farmers out there. They had to get their crops in and ...

Hannah: These were kids not from Salida?

Ted: All of this is all the surrounding area, not Buena Vista...[inaudible 00:17:21] Maysville, Poncha, and all around. All around.

Hannah: How did they get here?

Ted: A lot of them walked. Some of them walked three to four, five miles a day to school and after school, they'd go back. When I went to junior high school and high school, we lived down at the park, so that was almost a mile every day. Go to school, run home for lunch, run back to school, then that evening, we could go home and go to work helping dad in the grocery store stacking potatoes, putting sugar up in five pound sacks, and putting beans up in two-pound sacks.

[00:18:00] It was interesting. After I think about it after, you know, we worked hard. We never got nothing. We used to go to school, one of the worst things we've ever done, we didn't have money. None of the kids had money. A lot of Spanish families. We'd all get together and chip in our money, and the couple of them, we'd pay the boys' ways into the show and there was a big curtain where the exit was in the back of the show. The boys just sneak to go in. They sneak through the curtain. They'll open the back door and we'd all go in for nothing. We finally got caught.

Hannah: Show, you mean movies?

Ted: Theater. Cinema.

Hannah: Yeah, okay.

Ted: Technically though, we all done good. One thing we done one time, we got an idea. We took a rim off of a bicycle, and we took an inner tube and stretched it over there. We put sticks in it like a bow and arrow. One day, we shot it and it went over the Palace Hotel window from that end of the park, it went that far. Boy, we never heard the last of that.

Hannah: Good shot.

Ted: Yeah. Good shot. I'll say, it was a good shot. It was a long shot.

Hannah: What other mischief were you into?

Ted: Like I said, we had no toys to place with. Toys were just unheard of. If you wanted entertainment, you went out and got your own. Every summer, we'd be playing ball, like I said all the time. In the winter, we'd play football down the lower part down here, at Riverside Park. We had a Catholic school up there, and the Catholic boys would get together and they'd come down every Saturday. We'd have intersquad football. It was entertainment. We had to do it or go nuts, I don't which, nuttier. Life was good. I can't complain. I had a good life.

Hannah: Do you feel you got a good education in the Salida schools then or not?

Ted: My education like I said was high school. When I got out, dad didn't have no money to send me to college. He was struggling as it was and I says, "No." Let's see, '38, yeah it was 1942, four years later when I went in the Service. For four years, I lived at home and I didn't have nothing to do. Play, work, play, work and go to the show. We used to ride the bicycle down to Wellsville. They used to have a swimming pool down at Wellsville. A beautiful swimming pool, a dance hall down there. We should go on a Saturday nights, when we got a little older go down there and dance, but we'd ride the bicycle clear down to Wellsville, five miles. Get our swim and after the swim, ride the bicycle home.

[00:21:00]

Hannah: During the Depression, you said it was hard during the Depression. Were there people coming from other areas?

Ted: No. I don't think there was that ... The only transients we had was on the railroad, bums. We call them hobos. There's a lot of them who come on the trains and they'd come up there to the grocery store for a bologna sandwich or something, and maybe have a nickel or dime. Poor old dad, "Oh here, take the bread and I'll give you the bologna or something." Dad was very generous. I don't know how many of them guys he fed over the years.

Hannah: How many of them were there, let's say per week or ... ?

Ted: I'd say probably in a week's time, fifty or sixty. Some of them had money, some

[00:22:00] of them didn't have. Some of them are riding the rails because they didn't have the money for the railroad fare. Another thing I remember during the Depression, of course, we had the coal chutes down here. The brought the coal in from Gunnison on the narrow gauge, and they take it, and separate it down here. Then, they put it on the standard gauge well they drop lots and lots of coal over on until they ... In the evening, we take our little wagons and the gunny sack, and we go down there and take all the coal, pick it up, and take it home. We never got in any trouble. We didn't steal it. They didn't care. They knew we were all good kids. As a matter of fact, about that same time, we used to take our wagons and go up to these hills. There are a lot of trees up there at them times. We'd go up there. Chop down a bunch of trees and bring home kindling for firewood and stuff. We can always get busy, and a lot of trouble, I think. We never really got in any bad trouble. The only one trouble we got, one of the Spanish boys, Phil Lucero, one time while he ... [My apologies 00:22:55]. To be continued.

[00:23:00] [Phone conversation 00:22:57]. Hello? Hello? Yeah. Who? Hospital? For what?

Hannah: Okay.

Ted: Anyway, this Spanish boy found out they had a fan, an exhaust fan in the bottom of the bakery, right where the bakery is today. They had a big exhaust fan. He found out ... He propped a stick there. He crawls into the place and he was taking candy. He'd come down the next day at the park and he'd give us all candy. "Where is this candies coming from?" "A friend of mine gave it to me." We all were skeptical. One day, here come the cops to the grocery store, "Do you know Phil Lucero?" "The guy's my neighbor." "He's been giving you candy?" [00:24:00] "Yeah." "Where did it come from?" "I don't know." The baker, he felt ... He's a pretty good old guy. He felt sorry for him. My dad was the only one working out of the whole family, wasn't making any money at all, so dad says, "I'll try to pay it." He says, "But I can't do it all at once." The baker said, "No. I'm just going to scare him off. I'll just tell him he had to pay it and if he'd ever come and do it again, they'd go to jail."

[00:25:00] We did get in trouble one time. There was a bunch of railroad passengers, train cars sitting right along the river up on the railroad up there. A kid goes down with a slingshot and he's breaking windows. We had just gotten there, same Lucero. Here come the cops. He grabbed us all. They called my dad up, "We got your son in jail." "What is he in jail for?" "We don't know. He's all right. Don't worry about it. He's not in any trouble." We had to tell Phil done it, so he was going back into the paddy wagon to the jail. They were going to give us a good stern lecture. Anyway, the kid had a slingshot in his pocket. He snuck it over the seat of the paddy wagon and they searched us, they couldn't find out. It's probably still in this paddy wagon and it's probably junk someplace. Oh, man. It scared the living daylights out of us. He never went back again and we told him, "We don't have nothing to do with you. You're going to steal. We've been coming pretty close, but let's just cool it." That was life.

[00:26:00] We all grew up and went out ... After we graduated, it seemed like we all just ... As a matter of fact, the kid, his mother died the other day that's ninety-nine years old. One of her boys, I used to chum around with. Life is a funny thing. You grow up with kids like my graduating class, until we had our first 25th anniversary, we didn't know where anybody was, but we had a wonderful, wonderful reception. The response was fabulous. We had a party you couldn't believe.

Hannah: Everybody came from somewhere else? Were you the only one who was left from Salida?

Ted: Everybody came from ... Yeah, we had quite a few from Salida. One from Alaska, California, Nevada, Texas. A couple ... I don't remember all the forty-eight states but that's all right.

Hannah: How many hours a day would you work in the grocery store?

Ted: From eight until six. Six days a week.

Hannah: That was after high school?

Ted: Yes.

Hannah: Yeah, but while you were in school, did you work?

Ted: No. Well, I went down there to sack potatoes and stuff like ... Potatoes come in 100-pound bags.

Hannah: Would you do that every day?

[00:27:00]

Ted: If they were out, we had to do it, yeah, to keep the supply for the demand. There's a lot other memories you can open I could go through all day and night, and you'd get bored and go home and say, "I'll be back after supper." It was good life. It was a clean life. We existed. We didn't make any money, so we keep on going.

Hannah: So you were still living on Sackett?

Ted: Sackett.

Hannah: Yeah.

Ted: Yeah. I was living with the folks.

Hannah: Yeah. After high school, after you worked in the ... How many years did you work in the store?

Ted: Four, after I graduated. Then, Uncle Sam took me. I got one of his announcements and I was drafted in the Service. I spent three-and-a-half years, a little over three-and-a-half years in the Service.

Hannah: What were you doing specifically and what was your rank?

Ted: You name it, I've done it. I'll tell you, the funny part of the whole story is here, when I was working in Camp Carson, I volunteered on a cadre coming out of Fort Logan. We were already processed. We were heading for Texas on a train. We got pretty close to Colorado Springs and the sergeant comes through and he says, "I need a couple of volunteers for a little job." There's another guy from Salida and me who were seated together and I said, "Let's volunteer." We raised our hands. He says, "Okay. Get your luggage. Get ready to get off in Colorado Springs." It was nice thing for a long time because we both went to the hospital. We built that hospital down there. I was a bed pan commando for years, if you know what they are, cleaning the messes. Anyway, Jackie, he was a jack of all trades, he stayed there forty-two years in Camp Carson. Nineteen-and-a-half years, I had to go overseas. The sad part of it is, my papers, when I had my physical it says right on there, and I didn't know until later, "Not fit for overseas duty." I still don't know why. I'm still alive. I got happy.

[00:28:00]

[00:29:00]

When I got in there, the sergeant was just a prince. I got along good with him because I was honest with him. One day, he come and he says, "How far do you live from here?" He called me Nick the Greek. He never called me Kid. Nick the Greek, that's what he called me. My name was Ted. He says, "How far do you live from here?" I said, "About ninety-five miles." He says, "Would you like to go home once in a while?" "Sure. I've got a honey back there. I'd like to go home every weekend and see her." He says, "Okay. I'll make you this deal. You go home every weekend unless you're on charge of quarters." That means I have to take care of the book, of the guys coming in and checking out Saturday night. I said, "Okay." Every weekend, I was home.

Hannah: What was your honey's name? Your honey's name?

Ted: Helen Rogers.

Hannah: Where is she from?

[00:30:00]

Ted: Salida, a local yokel. I have another funny thing. When we were going to school, she just loathed me. She couldn't stand me. I couldn't figure what have I ever done to this girl? After I graduated, there was a country club out there in Smelertown. There was a dance hall, beer only. The Greek fellow asked me, "Would you like to work Saturday nights?" Boy, that was money. "Sure." I went out and I tended bar Saturday nights. I'm up to two hours in, I went and I tended bars. One night, she come over and she says, "Ted, I know I don't like you. You know why I don't like you, but I need a favor." I said, "Sure. What do you need?" She says, "Would you take me home?" She says, "My sister and I came up with a

[00:31:00] couple of rowdies, soldiers from Camp Hale." She says, "I don't want to have nothing to do with them and I need a ride." "Sure." After I got off work, I took her home and took her out to a little restaurant on the highway. It was a Greek fellow running that place and he started talking to me in Greek and he says, "Oh, what a good-looking girl," and all this and that.

[00:32:00] I knew it. She was a beautiful woman. I says, "How about a date next week." She said, "Don't you have to work?" I says, "I'll take off to go out with you." We started going there. We went together two-and-a-half years. The first part of it was when I went in to the Service at that time. The sergeant come in to me one day and he says, "Well, Ted, you can go get married. If you got a discharge, it's coming through." I was all excited. I called mom up on the phone and I says, "Hey, we're going to get married someday." "How come," she says. "Well, we're all ready and I'm going to be discharged." She was all full of it. Boy, she was ready to get married. She says, "Okay." Sunday night while everybody was asleep, we snuck out the window. We were living with her mother at that time, we got out the window. Took our little ditty bag. Went to Canon City. We had a JP marry us. And it hit the ceiling when we got home. Her mother was glad. She loved me.

Hannah: How old were the two of you?

Ted: Twenty ... When did I get married. You ask such silly questions. I'd say roughly twenty-three. She was a year or two younger, two years difference. Mom liked me. She just adored me. We went and got married. We were on our honeymoon at the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs and the telephone rings. It was my mother. She says, "I don't know what's wrong." She says, "You got to get back to Camp Carson tomorrow." I said, "Now what?" I got back to Camp Carson and reported the next day. "Sergeant, what's wrong? You took me off my honeymoon." He says, "That isn't the worst of it. You're on your way to overseas."

Hannah: When was this? Which year?

[00:33:00]

Ted: '42.

Hannah: What month?

Ted: Let me think. We got married New Year's. I was on my way overseas in about '43 because I'd been in Camp Carson a little over a year. I says, "What happened, sergeant?" I cussed him out. I was so mad. He could've put me in the brig and I'd still been there. I says, "You told me to go home and get married. Didn't you?" He says, "Guess, somebody pulled some strings. You're going in place of somebody else." So, over I went. Landed and then we got on a boat in England. You don't want to hear this. We got on a boat in England. We were in a convoy. We got out there quite a ways and the U-boats chased us. Then, we had a storm. They say it's the worst storm they'd ever had in the Atlantic Ocean in all

[00:34:00] the years. The waves were as high as Tenderfoot, believe it or not. We were in one of these little Henry J. boats, just enough to take a hundred or two hundred troops cramped in there like sardines. I got so sick, I couldn't keep nothing on my stomach. The sergeant, he came up, "It's all in your head." I said, "Well, sarge, it's isn't in my stomach." I says, "There's nothing left to come up."

[00:35:00] We got on the way to England, we got chased all the way to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Fortunately, we got through but we've seen some of our boys sink out there. The U-boats, down they went. We got to Halifax and I says, "The old lady two doors up the steep from the folks was from Halifax, Nova Scotia. Grandma Kennedy." I wrote dad a letter and I says, "I'm in the prettiest little country you've ever seen. I wish I could tell you where I am, but I can't do it. By the way, how is Grandma Kennedy doing?" Oh, boy, that old boy took it right there. He ran over to Mrs. Kennedy and he says, "Where are you from?" She says, "Halifax, Nova Scotia." He says, "That's where Ted is." That's where I was. He deduced it. It took us thirty-three days from the time we left New York to get to England. In the interim, I got an infection in my ear. I was down for days and I got to England, I was in the hospital for ten days. I can't remember what they called it in there, but it was a big puss bag in there and they pierced it, and it came out. Then, they'd pierce it and come out.

[00:36:00] Finally, they got me in the hospital. They got me down and blah-blah-blah, got me cured so I got transferred here, then I got transferred there and I had to go here, and I had to go there. I volunteered for everything. I didn't want to go to the frontlines. I couldn't go anyway. I don't know why, but I wasn't eligible for combat duty. Sometimes, I was as close as I could see the cannons on the other side belching smoke. But I shouldn't have been over there. I should've been home. Mama, I gave the two best years of my life to the army. You had enough now? No. You want to shut me up?

Hannah: Would you say that was a bad experience or a good experience being in the army?

Ted: After I got home all right, it was a wonderful experience because I got over to Germany, I went through France, Luxembourg, Holland, and Germany. I got to Germany, I never knew a word in German. Not a word. I've had a kid who was working with me, that German boy. His name was Ted, incidentally. He was working at my outfit and he was my Dolmetscher. You know what that is? An interpreter, okay. See? Anyway, he started teaching me German. With six month's time, I can interpret the German. Now, when they were bringing the Nazis in and I was cross-examining them all the time. I got fluent. I could write in German, read it, and speak it just like that. But it's gone now.

[00:37:00]

Hannah: You said you also grew up speaking Greek.

Ted: Yeah. That was the language at home.

Hannah: Did your mom learn it.

Ted: Slovenian. All I learned was the non-speakable quotes.

Hannah: Slovenian, you say.

Ted: Uh-huh. Slovenian.

Hannah: She spoke? Your mom?

Ted: Yeah. My mother come from Yugoslavia.

Hannah: Oh, okay.

Ted: If you don't understand my English, you correct me, would you? When I got over, I was pretty proud because I learned that language and made lots of friends in Germany. I loved them German people. I got along with them, except the French. I just couldn't stand them. I never did like and I still don't like them.
[00:38:00] You're not French, are you? Anyway, I ... Let's see, what else? I did see some beautiful country and had a lot of experiences. I could tell you one about some liquor if you want me to tell you about the colonel, but I don't think you'd want to hear that. It's interesting. Anyway, one day, Ted comes in and he says, "Kommen, kommen, schnell, schnell." We got up to the car. I got my jeep and he takes me way out in the country.

Hannah: Go ahead.

Ted: We get to a bomb shelter, big shelter. We'd go downstairs and this thing is full of liquor. Schnapps, champagne, wine, anything in the liquor department. Must've been about 3,000 bottles down there. I told him, "Don't tell nobody."
[00:39:00] One day while the sergeant is delivering a message to the officers, we didn't have, they had the stuff we had the (indecipherable). I said, "How about a drink?" Oh, my God. He says, "You know how long it's been?" He's a colored boy, fightingest guy in the war. I says, "I got some good French schnapps that you'd appreciate." He had two Bolt Jolts and he was feeling no pain. "Oh, man, would I like to have some of these." I says, "How many bottles do you want? It's \$5 a bottle," just right out of a clear, blue sky. I got \$50. I went down the basement. I had some in the basement. He bought them. Pretty soon, he'd comes on the next trip and he brings me some good rations for the enlisted men.

[00:40:00] We have five Danish people doing the cooking and housework. This one old gal, she could cook anything. I mean, she was a fabulous cook. The girls clean the houses and do the ironing and washing. Wonderful people. Anyway, we stayed there a while and the sergeant kept check- ... I got transferred. He followed. I took the liquor with me. I knew where the place was, so I never got too far from the cash and one day, he came in and he says, "I'm loaded. I got a hundred bucks." "No problem. I'll be back in an hour." Ted and I, we go out and we put twenty bottles in there and back to town. Catch him on the side street and gave

him that. Thanksgiving was coming and he says, "What are you going to eat for Thanksgiving?" I says, "Probably K-rations or C-rations, or officers' leftovers." He says, "What do you want?" I says, "Really?" "What do you want?" "It's going to cost you," I says. "Hey, that's no problem." I says, "I want a turkey, cranberries, and all the Thanksgiving stuff, and Coca-Cola." The officers had Coca-Cola and we played hell to get any out of them. They just wouldn't give us any. That was a treat.

[00:41:00] Thanksgiving, they didn't bring us any but we had two cases in the basement. The old sergeant brought me two cases of Coke and all the stuff to eat. We had a Thanksgiving dinner. It was funny. The next day, I get a letter from my honey, "Oh, honey. We had such a wonderful dinner," blah-blah-blah, "I missed you and I know you didn't have anything good to eat, enjoying mama's good home cooking." I got homesick but this gal was a good cook. She made me forget mom, anyway. This went on for about six months. In the interim, I'm running a courier run from Kassel to Frankfurt. I get on the Autobahn. I drove that

[00:42:00] Autobahn every day running courier, mail. One day, I went in there and this lieutenant colonel was sitting in there and he says, "Where are you from son?" I says, "I'm from Colorado." "Well, how ironic. What city?" I says, "Salida." "You're kidding me. Do you know Mary (indecipherable)?" I says, "Yes. She was my nurse back in the states, in New York." Her husband was a grocer just like Dad, a small town grocer. Blah-blah-blah, got me acquainted and he says, "Well, if you ever need anything," he says, "Next time you come up to Kassel, you let me know in advance and I got a treat for you." I says, "Call me. I need prior notice."

He calls me up one day, "This is Colonel so-and-so, Argys. I'm coming up." "Okay." A couple of hours, yeah, that's just about right, so we jumped in the jeep and went out and got the schnapps and had two cases, twenty-four bottles. He says, "Where did you get this?" "I'm not telling you. This is private." He says, "Did you steal it?" "Nope." I says, "I found it and I'm going to keep it. Nobody's going to know. Lynch me if you want to, but I'm not giving you this." "It was a myth, 3,000 bottles at \$5 a bottle." That isn't bad money, but I never got rid of it all. Everything went along fine. The sergeant for Christmas eve, he couldn't give us ... We had pork, you know, beef loins and cut T-bones and short cuts and stuff like that. You've never seen that processing. "What do you want for Christmas?" I said I want a short loin. That's about twenty steaks, T-bones and short cuts. "No problem." We had rations. If the captain in the basement, if he'd ever know what we had in that basement, he had killed us. We told him there was a damn snake down there and I wasn't about to go down there any more than I had to.

Anyway, in some way, shape, or form he heard about this liquor. How he did it, I don't know. Ted swore he never told him because he was making money, too.

[00:44:00] Every time I sell, I give a little rake off to him, fifteen or twenty bucks. It was the heights of glory. He calls me in the office and he says, "Where is this liquor located?" "It's out in the country." "I'll get you a big truck and I want every damn bottle in this office by tonight." I said, "We can't carry it by tonight." We hid some in the forest, but we didn't tell him everything. We don't want the

[00:45:00] captain being smarter than me. He says, "Sunday morning, 6:00, you start ... " but he hated liquor. He hated liquor. He just loathed this stuff. He says, "Tomorrow morning, Sunday morning at 6:00, you get them two Danes and a couple of Germans and started pouring this stuff down the toilet." "Captain, this is expensive liquor." "I don't care. You pour it down the toilet." I got an idea. I went to another outfit that's down the road and I talked to the sergeant, "I got to make a long distance call to Colonel so-and-so." He says, "Go ahead."

[00:46:00] I called for the colonel. He says, "Colonel so-and-so." I says, "This is Ted Argys from Salida, Colorado." "Well, how are you doing?" "Oh, you're not going to be happy when I tell you this." I says, "I got a bunch of liquor and Sunday morning at 6:00, I'm going to pour 2,000 or 3,000, I don't know how many bottles down the sewer." He says, "What? Are you drunk?" I says, "No, sir. I never drink while I'm on duty." "Are you kidding me?" "No, sir. I'm serious. The captain wants it down the sewer at 6:00." He says, "It's a little early for me, but I will be there at 6:00 in the morning. I'll bring the old 4x4 and we'll just load that stuff up." We stalled around about a quarter after 6, and here come that poon flash and he'd come in here and he said, "You haven't started yet? Just getting ready, captain. They're just bringing it upstairs," and I just got the first bottle in my hand and I told the colonel, "Don't knock." Here he walks in. "What in the hell is going on here?" "Just pouring this liquor down the toilet." "Who in the hell told you to do that?" "Captain."

[00:47:00] "That's enough of that. Cease right now. Anyone upstairs just, you know ... " Man, he'd let him have it at pointblank. He said, "Do you know how many thousand boys died coming in, so you could be here enjoying life and you're pouring their liquor down the base- ... Do you know how many soldiers could enjoy a drink out of all of this? I'm taking a line. I confiscate it in the name of the United States Army." The captain started arguing and he says, "I don't think I'd argued too much, captain. I might have you on the carpet." He says, "I know a general that would just hate to hear this." He says, "Okay, take them."

Hannah: That's a good story.

Ted: Huh?

Hannah: That's a good story. Now, we have to go back to Salida.

Ted: Okay.

Hannah: When you got out of the army?

Ted: Back to the grocery business. Dad was getting along in years and he says, "I'm going to take my ... "

Hannah: You were in the service for two or three years, right?

Ted: Three-and-a-half years roughly. When I came back, I went back in the grocery

business but the Safeway is just giving too much competition. We had credit. We had delivery service. Everything was ruining the business. Dad decided when he was sixty-five years old, he is going to retire and turn it over to me. I says, "No. I don't want it. We're going to close it up." He says he'd ...

Hannah: Where was this business?

[00:48:00]

Ted: 123 Lower F. You're familiar with lower F? What's the name of that restaurant down there? (Dakota's) Bistro?

Hannah: Yeah, I think so.

Ted: On the alley.

Hannah: Uh-huh.

Ted: It was right across the street. There's a black front, marble front. He'd got a lot of canoozle on it. Dad was there for fifty-some years. I says, "I'll tell you what we'll do. The 15th of December is payday for the railroad, and we had a lot of railroad business. When they come in to pay their bill, we'll just tell them, "No more credit." So, we cashed all the credit in. We were lucky. We had very little in the book, so we got through. We sold the business and everything. I tried to get a job here. I tried white water. I tried atomic research out near ... Oh, Lord. What's that? I can't think of the name of the town. Big, atomic plant out there, Las Vegas right out of the ... Right out of Las Vegas, I can't remember. I could get in there, so they come in and gave me a complete family history and checked me out. Traffic tickets. It was amazing, the questions they asked. Personal life. There was one hundred of us who took the test and ten of us passed it. And then mama says, "I don't want to go to Las Vegas, honey. It's too damn hot." "Okay, we'll stay here."

[00:49:00]

After that, a few days later, I was sitting down at the drug store, Salida Drug where everybody in town met for coffee and this guy come in and he says, "How would you like a job selling cars?" "Sure. I can sell cars." He took me over to the boss and the guy says, "You ought to know, you come from an automobile family. Your dad and uncles owned that business." I says, "I can sell cars." "I'll start you at \$350 a month." Hey, that was money from heaven. He says, "In thirty days, if you prove yourself, I'll go you \$475."

[00:50:00]

Hannah: It was which year?

Ted: Ha?

Hannah: Which year?

Ted: Oh, Lord. 1959. I told you you're refreshing my memory, aren't you? So, 1959. I went in the office on Monday morning, got all the information he wanted from

me for my insurance and stuff. He says, "I've got an old Buick out there, a '52 Buick." He says, "It's a beautiful car, but I can't sell it. Take that thing to the valley and sell it." I jumped in and I go over the valley, and I go over there and stopped in a service sta- ...

Hannah: We're talking about the San Luis Valley?

Ted: Yeah. I go at the Center and I start to mucking it around and I went to the service station, John Barry Station there and I introduced myself. I says, "I'm looking for somebody who wants to buy a nice car. I'm just new on the job." He [00:51:00] looked at it over and he says, "The guy who just left here will buy that car." I went down a nine-mile road west and down two-mile road south. He said "look under the clump of trees, that's where you'll find who you're looking for." Anyway, I went down there and I sold him the car. I called the boss up on the telephone and I said, "Would you send somebody after me?" He says, "What's the matter? The car broke down?" "No, I got cash for you." "You sold it?" "Yeah." "You're kidding me." "I got the money in my pocket." "I don't believe it." Oh, my gosh. Saturday night comes, he takes Helen and I, and he wined us and dined us. He says, "I think this guy's going to make it. He sold that damn car after all the time I had it. First trip to the valley." I made lots of friends over there. I spoke the language.

Hannah: You're talking about Spanish.

[00:52:00]

Ted: Spanish. Yeah, I learned it in the grocery. They got the wetbacks. We call them Mojados over there, wetbacks. They hear of me and they'd come over there after payday on Saturday night. We got \$200.

Hannah: Were they Hispanic people or were they Mexicans?

Ted: Mexicans. These were all Mexicans, wetbacks, those that come up here to work the fields.

Hannah: Right.

Ted: Then, I started doing business with the ... Here's the expression, white folks. I went away from the Spanish as much as I could, but they were good people, so I sold them plenty. I now start expanding my territory. I says, "I'm going to start with some of these farmers." They never bought cars and Chevrolets, very few of them. I was making a bundle of money over there. One time, when Climax was closed up for six months, I was a \$2,500 a month commission.

Hannah: What year was that when Climax was closed?

[00:53:00]

Ted: '63, '64, '65. I stayed with him for five years. You're looking at the clock and I'm talking too much. I stayed there for five years with him, then another guy came

in. He put me on a different pay scale. Then, I really started selling cars. The people from Leadville heard about me and the people from Bewnie (Buena Vista) and I was an honest salesman. I worked with them for five years. They sold out. One went to Grand Junction, he set up a big dealership. The other one who went to ... made enough money off of me, he'd done all right ... Casper Wyoming and set him up a dealership. Both of them called me to come and work, but my mama didn't want to move, so what the heck. She had a good job. I had a good job. I spent until 1971 ...

Hannah: Excuse me, when you're saying "mama," you're talking about?

Ted: My honey.

Hannah: Your wife.

Ted: I always called her mama.

Hannah: What year had you gotten married?

Ted: What's that?

[00:54:00]

Hannah: Oh, yeah. That's before you went to the service.

Ted: That's after I come home from the service. I got a while in the car business. My dad couldn't believe it. One time he says, "You're going to starve in this business. You're going to starve." One day, they had a lot of snow in the valley and nobody had four-wheel drives and we were loaded with them pickups. I was taking in pickups over there like they were just nothing. This guy called me, "Did you sell Joel Lowe a little pickup?" "Yeah." "Bring me one." That month, I had \$3,500 commission. The boss was so proud of me. He says, "I can't believe it." He says, "we've never done this kind of business." Another salesman who went over there ahead of me, he was doing business with the Mexicans. They were simple. He could take it, but I wouldn't do it. I would be honest right on the carpet with him. They like honesty. They were so nice to me. I'd go over there on a Saturday, getting off the subject, during potato harvest also, I'd get paid every Saturday. They brought their trucks on what they call a floor plan.

[00:55:00]

The floor plan, they play once in the fall or twice they have to make their payments. In the fall, maybe 2,000, 3,000, \$4,000. We had to go over there and I get over there, and I'd have five or six, eight, ten sacks of potatoes. They all brought me potatoes to come home with. I'd bring a pickup load of potatoes home and keep giving to all the help down at the garage. It was a wonderful life. Then, they got another boss. They sold out and he was a crook. We argued and he tried to cheat me, and he tried to cheat me. I was too smart to be cheated.

Hannah: What was the name of that business again?

Ted: First, it was Stapleton Chevrolet, then it was Shellabarger Chevrolet, then it was Post Chevrolet.

Hannah: What was the location?

[00:56:00]

Ted: 1st Street, down where Fritz's Attic is. My uncle's garage, you know where that ... I'd be off the subject here, where that fancy store is down that big garage on 1st Street about two blocks down that got all the elk heads and fancy ... ? That used to be my Uncle Dick's garage. They built that up from scratch, the three of them. Anyway, I stayed there until '71 and went into business for myself. I says, "This is stupid. I'm going over selling a new car and I know how much profit it is. I can go buy used cars, buy leased cars all I can, you know, buy backs they call them. They lease them and then sell them to get rid off them. My buy backs from ... I made a good friend in Pontiac. I was constantly bringing Pontiacs in Arizona. I did a ferocious business. This was when Climax was running. All of the sudden, Climax went caput and business went caput.

Hannah: You had your own location then? You opened your own business. Where was that?

Ted: I started on 3rd and F Street where that ... What do they call it? There's a little shop there. I think it's a pizza place right around the corner. They got to have this yard sale every Saturday. Then, I went down next to the ...

Hannah: On the West side?

Ted: Ha?

Hannah: On the West side of F Street.

Ted: Yeah. Then, I went to, next to the Pizza Hut. It was a vacant lot. I had to rent it because the guy from the Datsun Garage got so jealous of me. Went to Denver and bought the business, the building that I was renting downtown, so I was out.

Hannah: What was the name of your business?

[00:58:00]

Ted: Ted's Auto Sales. Who else? Mama then, I got her a good job. It's not interesting, but one day, one of the ... Our school buddies come in. He was a county commissioner. He looked disgusted and I said, "What's the matter, Eddie?" He says, "I need help. I need help manning the office up there and I can't find an efficient woman." "How much does it pay?" When I told me, I says, "I got a woman for you." That night, I come home for supper and I says, "I think I got a job for you." "I don't want another job." "Oh, yes, you do. This pays five times what you're making right now to start. The man's a good friend of yours and he's going to be at the house at 9:00 in the morning to talk to you." "Honey,

[00:59:00] you shouldn't do things like that." "You're going to take the job. There's no argument. I insist that you take the job." She became the finance clerk for the courthouse for many years, as efficient as ... All get out. She always did. CPAs would give her 100%.

Hannah: Now, this was in the '70s, right?

Ted: Yeah.

Hannah: You had children?

Ted: I had one boy and twin girls.

Hannah: That was after they were growing up?

Ted: Jim was born in '48, so that would be ... I was still in the grocery store then. No, where was I in '48? The girls were born in '57.

Hannah: What are their names?

Ted: Sharon and Karen, twins. Their pictures are over here on the wall. I have four grandchildren, three girls and a boy. As a matter of fact, I just came back from South Dakota. I attended this class graduation. He's the valedictorian of the class. It made me pretty proud. He was getting ... His mom went nuts up there. She's a good mother, too. A disciplinarian. He's going up there and getting these awards from different outfits and she used to whistle to beat the devil. That's off the subject, but that's interesting. You're going to learn more about me from Salida that you'll never hear. Anything you want to know about Salida, I'm here. I have things to say that might not come out too good. People talk about Salida today, but they don't know the real Salida. Years ago, we had the railroad. We had trains running from Gunnison, Alamosa. There's a narrow gauge. We had the passenger trains going and the freight trains going back and forth. We had shops down here you can't believe the buildings that they had down here in this depot one time. You could probably find a picture someplace. And then Climax went to hell, that took about 3,000 people.

[01:01:00]

Hannah: Tell me about that time when Climax closed.

Ted: Well, it was hard. I'll always remember the famous words of our illustrious newspaper ...

Hannah: Maybe we need to specify what Climax is. The Climax mine, right?

Ted: Climax Mining Company, yeah. American Molybdenum. Well, they just put 3,000 people out of business. They were making money. You know and I know today, there's nobody in Salida who makes money except the professional people and the owners of the establishments. The working person doesn't make salary, like at Walmart. Did you know at one time, I'm getting off the subject

again, there was eight grocery stores in this little town? Mama and daddy ...

Hannah: What year was that?

Ted:
[01:02:00] That's when I was in the grocery business way back when. In the '40s, '50s there was that many grocery stores. Four or five groceries downtown. There was pool halls downtown. We had two hospitals. We had five or six big clothing stores. It was a prosperous, little community.

Hannah: What did you do for entertainment then?

Ted: I had more money then than I did ... We entertain. We didn't get to go places. We had some nice, wonderful trips.

Hannah: In town, what did you do for amusement?

Ted: I used to do a lot of bowling. Mama done bowling and I bowl. We went here and there. We went dancing. We belong to the Elks ... We belong to the VFW. We participated in a lot of that stuff. Technically, we were both home bodies, so we didn't go that much. But when we wanted to go, we went. If somebody convinced us to go, we went. There was no ...

Hannah: You went on vacations?

[01:03:00]

Ted: Oh, yeah. We've been to Greece. We've been to Hawaii three times, Old Mexico, ten or fifteen times. As a matter of fact, before she got sick, we had just come back from the ... Just a minute. Panama Canal. We took the jaunt to the Panama Canal. That eleven-day trip on the boat, oh, gosh. That's something you should never miss. If you ever have the shekels you should take that trip. That's the thrill of a lifetime. I mean it. That's the 8th Wonder of the World, we got seven. Of course, six months later, she got leukemia and passed away.

Hannah: What year was that?

Ted: Ha?

Hannah: What year?

Ted: Two-and-a-half years ago.

Hannah:
[01:04:00] Back to Salida in the '40s or '50s, you said there were so many grocery stores and a lot going on, what did people do in ... ?

Ted: They worked on the railroad. On payday, that's the 15th and the 30th of the month, you could go down this bridge here or down on the lower end of C Street, there was another footbridge they call it, the one across the river and you watch them come across here and they'd come just in swarms going into

the stores, paying their bills, buying grocery. It was money. You don't have the money in Salida.

Hannah: Where did these people come from? Where they long-time Salida residents?

Ted: Oh, yeah. The railroaders have been here a long time. The miners were here. We had the big Monarch Quarry up there. They mined the fluorspar for cable and steel mills, down in Pueblo. They used that stuff to harness the steel. We had three or four small mines, good working mines. It was prosperous. Anybody
[01:05:00] you ask my age, they'll tell you the same thing. That was prosperity in them days. Everybody had money. Today, they don't have nothing. I tell you, I feel sorry for these young kids coming in here and trying to making a living. They just don't make that kind of money. They have to come in here and get all upset about it and pretty soon, they're gone again. You can't live on \$7 an hour unless your husband's making 30. Is he? 20?

Hannah: It was a good life then. You really feel that now for the people who want to make a living, it's bad here.

Ted: There's no income. \$7 an hour, \$5 an hour. Some guy asked me a job the other, to go to work for him part time for \$5 an hour and I says, "I draw more than that
[01:06:00] in Social Security." You know the welfare in Salida. I mean, the artisans, I don't know how they make it. I don't know ... they sell it.

Hannah: When did the artists start coming?

Ted: What's that?

Hannah: When did the artists start coming here?

Ted: The artists? The artisans?

Hannah: Yeah.

Ted: About eight-ten years now. Then, they started this steam plant that got all involved, you know, but how many people enjoyed that, 200 a year? I mean, a night. It's a certain type of entertainment for a certain type of people.

Hannah: You're talking about a steam plant. Was that the kind of thing in the earlier days in Salida?

Ted: It was a old public service place where they ...

Hannah: Yeah, no. But I mean, was there a theater and concerts, let's say in the '40s or '50s?

Ted: We had two theaters in Salida, the Salida Theater and Isis Theater.

Hannah: Were they movie theaters or stage?

Ted: Yeah, yeah.

Hannah: Was there any stage ... ?

Ted: No.

Hannah: Were there concerts?

[01:07:00]

Ted: Years ago, they had a big pavilion down here in the park. They had band concerts every week. There was a band here, a bunch of old bands.

Hannah: What kind of music was it?

Ted: Cuddly music, the good old-fashioned music. Of course, we haven't had them for thirty years. In my day, I've seen a heck of a change and as far as I'm concerned and I can get anybody my age that's still around, they'd feel the same way. It's just not the town it used to be. People, I don't know how you find them. Of course, you're ... People aren't like they used to be. They're not sociable. I got a guy across the street who's been here four years now, he's never said hello to me, I don't think. He just don't want to be bothered. You're going through your story about that?

Hannah: Sure.

[01:08:00]

Ted: I know. You'd get a kick out of it. About five years ago, we had a big snow, about twelve or thirteen inches. There was a couple who come in from Texas and they were building a house up on ... What's that development up there?

Hannah: Pinon Hills?

Ted: No, way up.

Hannah: Ute? Heights?

Ted: Antero?

Hannah: Mesa Antero?

Ted: Yeah. They rented this house. Well, old big mouth, I was going to go meet him and my wife says, "You've had nothing but problems with those strangers. Forget them." For three days and three nights, there was no footprints on the side. There was no footprints leading out of the house. No footprints on the porch. I got worried. On the third day, I said, "To hell with it. I'm going over there." I went over there. Knocked on the door and she says, "What do you

[01:09:00] want?" I says, "Ma'am, I was worried about your welfare. I hadn't seen any sign of life here. They used to have a lot of trouble with the gas furnace there and I thought maybe you got asphyxiated or something." "No, we're fine. Thank you." Slammed the door in my face. Real appreciative.

[01:10:00] Monday night, my wife goes to the sorority. Who's one of the guests of honor, the old bag from across the street. "How do you like your neighborhood you're living in?" "It's a nice neighborhood. People don't bother. I've got an nosy, old neighbor over there. He just drives me crazy." She's stretching the truth. My wife is sitting in the audience. She says, "This man come over there, knocked on the door, right through the snow and everything, blah, blah." After she got through, my wife ... The Irish come out. She stood up and she says, "Ma'am, I just want to tell you. I am the wife of that nosy neighbor. He was worried about your welfare. He thought something might've happened because he used to take care of that house and they had trouble with the heater." But she says, "I'll promise you this. If that house burns down and you're standing on the porch to get rescued, he isn't coming over to help you." She told her off. Them women, they roared that night after. Boy, I've never seen Helen get so mad in her life. She blew her top. That's neighbors. They don't want to be bothered.

Hannah: You feel that's like that in general? I mean, that all people ...

Ted: No, no, no.

Hannah: These days are like that?

Ted: No, no, no. I've met people that have been good friends of mine for years. The neighborhood, I always go meet them. If they want to be friends, fine. If they don't ... I've lived eighty-three years of life ...

Hannah: But it definitely was different when you were growing up.

[01:11:00]

Ted: Oh, I think everybody was sociable in them days. We were more compact. Everybody knew everybody. You go down the store, to tell you the truth I'll go ...

Hannah: Why do you think, I mean, the population numbers haven't changed? Why do you think ... ?

Ted: Oh, yeah. The population has got to be about 6,000.

Hannah: Yeah, but a hundred years ago, it was 5,000.

Ted: 5,200.

Hannah: What do you think caused the difference here?

Ted: It's the different types of people we're getting in and they're money people.

Some of them are nice and some of them are devils, that's all. You've run into that. You know people. Hollywood. You know all these people. You got a nice neighborhood up there. What's his name? Ron? There's a prince.

Hannah: He is.

Ted: Yeah. He told me he's going to send a good looking blonde down here to see me. I got shaved two days in a row and I said, if she isn't coming, to hell with her. In them days ... you go to Walmart, you don't know anybody. You go to supper and eat, you don't know anybody. Of course, there's cliques. Everybody probably got some group that you associate with and you know, maybe you don't get along with people. I don't know. You look tough, anyway. I think it's a great change. For me, it's not to the best for Salida. I don't think they're doing a thing to improve this town. They keep saying, "We're going to get industry." Where are you going to put industry? It's a common knowledge. Where can you put industry? With payroll I'm talking about. Everybody gets excited. This place is coming in and we're going to start another restaurant ... So, they get \$6 an hour. Big deal. They work thirty hours a week most of them because they don't want to go forty-hour weeks.

[01:12:00]

Hannah: You said that your wife wasn't interested in moving out of the area.

Ted: Oh, no. She loved it here. After she died ...

Hannah: Why did she love it?

Ted: I think we just settled here. We've been here all our life.

Hannah: How long have you lived in this house?

Ted: Where?

Hannah: Here, this house.

Ted: This house?

Hannah: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ted: Fifty-three years, fifty-four. I can't remember. We bought it ... Oh, hell no. Was it '48, my son was born. How many years would that be? Fifty-six? '48 and fifty-six, yeah.

Hannah: Yeah, right.

Ted: Yeah. There was another incident that just tears me apart. We were renting an apartment and we had a landlady, she was a drunk. She had a boyfriend who was a prominent dentist and they were having parties all the time over there

[01:14:00] raising hell every night. You know the walls have ears? One night, we had some kids over to play cards, Canasta, that fancy game. We played Canasta. That morning she got up, she says, "You're going to have to quit making so damn much noise." "The party broke up at 11:00." "I don't care." She was mean. She says, "I think you better go find another place." It was a barn, anyway. I says, "Okay." I went down and talked to Uncle Gus and I says, "Uncle Gus, I got a bad problem." He says, "What's the matter?" "I got to find a house to buy in a hurry." He said, "Boy, are you lucky." He never said goddamn. I'm just using an expression. He said, "Goggamn." He never swore. He says, "Faye was just here and she wants to sell that house up on G. Street." I knew the house. It used to be the mayor's house years ago, Mayor Claude Ferno.

[01:15:00] Anyway, I got a hold of her and we went up to the house, Uncle Gus and I. I says, "What do you want for it?" She told me ... That's another thing I'll talk about. She told me how much she wanted for it and I says, "Can I give you a check to hold it until I can get the bank on Monday?" "Sure. That's fine. That's fine." I gave her a check for \$500. She calls me Sunday and she says, "I'm going to have to back out of the deal." My heart went bang like that. I says, "Why?" She says, "Because I've got a better offer." I says, "Well, bring me my check back." She says, "Oh, I cashed the check." I says, "You're bound by law." Her son was an attorney. She didn't believe me. I says, "Call your boy up." She called me back and she says, "I guess I fouled myself up, didn't I?" I says, "Yes, you did." I says, "You aren't going to get me out of here. If you give me \$10,000 I'm not going to move." I wasn't in, but I was getting ready. Oh, she was mad. Of course, this house wasn't this way. It was a barn, too. Guess what this house sold for back in about '50? If you buy that house up there ... Oh, no, that was built later, where you're living. How long have you been there?

[01:16:00] Hannah: Well, we're talking about your house.

Ted: No, I'm just telling ...

Hannah: Tell me about your house.

Ted: \$5,250.

Hannah: That was in the '50s, '56 you said, right?

Ted: Yeah. But look at the price of this property. The house I'm telling you, the old crank lived in, that (could have been) bought for \$39,000 not long ago. This one right over here, the brick one, I could have bought it for \$39,000.

Hannah: Would that have been in the '80s?

Ted: Add ten years.

Hannah: '90s?

Ted: Yeah. My wife wouldn't let me buy it and it sold for \$80-something thousand after she backed me out of it. The guy got antsy and raised the price and sold it for \$80,000. It's ridiculous in this town. It's absolutely stupid. You could go to Pueblo and buy a new house for less money than that, a brand new one.

[01:17:00]

Hannah: But it's not Salida.

Ted: Huh?

Hannah: It's not Salida.

Ted: No. What's Salida got?

Hannah: You tell me. You love it here.

Ted: As far as I'm concerned, I don't think they got a lot. They got Halliborg and Ted, and what else? They don't have any lot. What do we have? We have hot days and cold days. Hot nights and warm nights. What else?

Hannah: But you like it here, right?

Ted: I'd like to see it go backwards. It was years ago, but it isn't going to happen. It's hard for you to imagine not being here, but when I was growing up, there was so many people running up and down this ... Quit looking at that clock. It's fast anyway, isn't it? 5:00, what time does husband eat when he gets home?

[01:18:00]

Hannah: Don't worry about that. I'm just thinking about the tape.

Ted: No. I don't think Salida has changed for the best. I don't know. I just don't know how to explain it. Money is what's ruling the ... There's so much money running around loose anymore that everybody wants this and everybody wants that, and pretty soon, we got everything and we're all in debt again. Are you in debt?

Hannah: No.

Ted: You own your home?

Hannah: Let's talk about you.

Ted: Let's talk about my past. I can't get no information out of you.

Hannah: Later.

Ted: Spater. Okay. What do you want to know.

Hannah: You said this was a mayor's house. How do we spell his name?

Ted: Claude Ferno, C-L-A-U-D-E F-E-R-N-O.

[01:19:00]

Hannah: Okay. All right. Well, we're kind of close to the end of the tape. Is there anything else you want to say?

Ted: What do you want to ask me?

Hannah: I can't think of anything now.

Ted: You mean, you ran out of questions?

Hannah: Oh, I probably can find a few but maybe you have to say something.

Ted: Fine. I got answers. You got questions? What is that program? You got questions, I got answers?

Hannah: Well, then I would like to thank you very much for your interview.

Ted: That's all you want to know? That's only an-hour-and-a-half.

Hannah: Yeah, that's our time.

Ted: Do you think you'd be able to get an article out of that? You'll probably throw it in the trash.

Hannah: No, I don't think so. Anything else?

Ted: Das ist alle. Das ist gut.

Hannah: Okay.