JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with
William Grunewald
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Conducted by Barbara McCuskey
March 21, 1985

Transcribed by Renae Blasdell

Biography

William Grunewald was born in Cedar Rapids, on June 16, 1907, the son of William John and Emma Christina Grunewald. His entire life has been spent in Cedar Rapids, where he has been a realtor for the majority of his adult years. He attended the Cedar Rapids Public schools, Coe College, and the University of Iowa where he concentrated in journalism, English, sociology, and economics. He and his family had done extensive travel in Europe between World Wars I and II, and his memories of those experiences are expecially enlightening as well as his commentary concerning the Depression years in this country.

INTERVIEW TOPICS
CEDAR RAPIDS: THE EARLY DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

I. PERSONAL LEAD-IN QUESTIONS

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(In his home)

BM: Mr. Grunewald, where were you born?

Grunewald: I was born in Mercy Hospital in Cedar Rapids, here.

BM: When?

Grunewald: June 16, 1907.

BM: Were your parents Cedar Rapids natives?

Grunewald: They were living here, of course, for a while before I was born. My mother was originally from Ohio, Canton, Ohio. Incidentally, her mother did some sewing for President McKinley's wife. (Laughter)

My father was born in Blairstown about twenty-five miles west of here. The old homestead did burn down about twenty years ago. My cousins still live there. My uncle passed away a few years ago. But it's still in the family. The farm had a large cattle-raising operation there.

I went to grade school here--Madison School--the old Madison School that stood where the city jail is now. I don't know if that put them in mind of our class or not! (Laughter)

BM: I know it's not Cedar Rapids things, but you were talking about your mother did some sewing for President McKinley's wife. Was she a young girl? President McKinley....

Grunewald: I don't mean my mother, my grandmother.

BM: Your grandmother?

Grunewald: Her mother, excuse me.

BM: What brought your mother to Iowa?

Grunewald: Well, my father. He was studying law at the Backraysor University. I don't know how he got acquainted with her, some way. He was quite interested in politics, always was. He stumped the area there for William Jennings Bryan when he was running for president. He gave talks, and I think that's possibly how he met my mother there. They were married in Ohio, and then they moved out here in Cedar Rapids. My father set up a law practice here in town in the old Masonic Temple which is where the Cedar River Tower is standing now.

BM: You say that he campaigned for William Jennings Bryan, how would you describe your father's politics?

Grunewald: Well, I'd say he was a good old Democrat.

BM: Did he stay a Democrat?

Grunewald: He stayed a Democrat 'til he died. He passed that on to his son, too. His son's also a Democrat!

BM: That's interesting. Was he active in politics as a young man?

Grunewald: Yes, he was, he did quite alot of campaigning for Bryan when he was a young man. And when he was here, he was very active in the Democratic Party in Cedar Rapids and Linn County. He was always interested in politics. Of course, when he was--about the time I was born, in fact, before I was born, he became acquainted with Dr. Pratt--W.A. Pratt--of the Universalist

him what he was doing the next day. He invited him up to his home there, what they call the "little brown house," I think they called it. So my father went up and visited with him about two or three hours.

BM: What were his impressions? Did he talk about this after . . . ?

Grunewald: He didn't agree with the Fascist philosophy at all, but he said that Hitler was no dummy; he said that he was really a very intelligent man. And very, of course, dedicated to his ideas. He said he was surprised, though, he thought that Hitler was not as tall as most people think he was. He was rather on the short side. He had raised heels, extended heels, on his shoes to make him look a little taller.

But he was quite interesting, I think it was an interesting experience for him.

BM: Was your father born in Germany?

Grunewald: No, he was born here in Blairstown, west of here. But his parents were both born in Germany, northeastern Germany.

BM: Did your father fight in World War I?

Grunewald: No, but as I say, my father was always interested in social problems. Even at home here during the Depression he gave talks and different things to try to help when he could, with the relief organizations.

BM: This is fascinating, I have never known anybody that has even come within spitting distance of Adolf Hitler. Tell me more about this experience he had. How did he feel about the future of things after he had spoken with this man? Of course, he couldn't see into the future and see that he was going to become

so powerful?

Grunewald: No, and of course he didn't believe in the Fascist philosophy at all. And as I say, of course, he felt that the tremendous debt that they had put on Germany at that time was just like giving a man--taking him in the kitchen and piling the sink full of dirty dishes and everything. And then taking the water away and taking the dishrag away, and telling him, "Now go wash the dishes." That was the position Germany was in. There was no possibility they could pay that debt off anyway. And, of course, it just led to worse, and finally they got to the point where they were on the verge of a revolution. Well, they didn't have a revolution, of course.

It's a pity that a fine country like that could be led so far down the road that way, but it's one of those things.

BM: To the point were Hitler's philosophy sounded very--sounded like salvation?

Grunewald: That's really what it amounted to. They were just to that point, I think. It's unfortunate for the world and for Germany too.

BM: What were your father's opinions as history unrolled and he saw the things that were happening with this man that he had met and spoken with? How long did your father live?

Grunewald: He died in 1944.

BM: So he lived to see?

Grunewald: He still lived to see the world war, the beginning of World War II.

BM: What feelings did he have when he saw Hitler come to power, it would have been 1935 or 1936, 1937, right in there?

Grunewald: Yes, 1933 and 1934, right in there. Well, of course, as I say, he was disappointed because he felt that the type of thing that Germany had--at that time--was dictatorship and so on. It wasn't the kind of government that my father believed in. He saw so much suffering over there. Like these people at Oberammergau, for instance. During the war they starved--while whatever side-treaty was being debated, I guess, they kept the food out of the country and they starved Germany into submission.

I met people over in Oberammergau, I know he was there in 1920, I think the first year he could get through there, and early after the war.

Andrew Lange's normal weight was 160 pounds and he went down to 90 pounds. That was just typical of hundreds--and hundreds of thousands of children died of rickets. He saw children whose knees would be together and their feet would be that far apart. From lack of nutrition, you know. So he felt in that way that it wasn't right that the country, no matter what they had done, actually, some people think--I think President Hoover hit the nail, I think he said plain care after the World War I treaty was being worked on. Plain care, of course, was when he was flushed from Germany. Hoover said, "Well, you can either have this, or you can have this, or you can have World War II." He said, "I'll take World War II." And he got World War II!

BM: It sounds as though your father was a man of social conscience. Did he do any work here in Cedar Rapids or in the Linn County area

was he involved in politics here, too?

Grunewald: He was justice of the peace here for a few years.

BM: What did that job entail? Would you have any memories of your dad being justice of the peace and what it meant?

Grunewald: I think he was a good justice of the peace. I think he felt it right to see that justice was done in every case that he could. I think that he was very fair with anyone that came up to his court there. He had a very strong social conscience. I think he felt very bad that Germany had taken the road that it did, but he felt of course, that it wasn't completely their fault either. Probably, we might have done the same thing if we had been in the same shoes. We don't know.

BM: When we spoke before, Mr. Grunewald, you told me that your father was instrumental in starting the city market. Could you tell me about that?

Grunewald: He and a close friend of his, Mr. Fuchs, they lived on the west side. They felt that they should have a kind of a city market here. My father told him about the flower markets and the city markets over in Europe that the cities have over there.

He and Mr. Fuchs went out to all the truck farmers around the edge of the city and got them to bring in their produce. They located the stands up there on First Street in back of--well let's see-between F and A Avenue on the west side there along the banks of the river there.

A number of years it was located there until they built a new round-house on the southwest side. They had about sixty or

seventy booths there at that time.

BM: How did he go about setting it up? What did it entail? Did they have to go through the city to do this?

Grunewald: I think they had to get a permit for it. But the city cooperated with them and they had that whole half--almost a block there from the F Avenue Bridge south from the bridge along the river bank there. Of course, there were no seawalls in back there. The market was very well--of course, it always has been very well patronized. It took off like crazy.

BM: I just wonder, because of the tours and things that he--he was a tour conductor--because of that, that was where his interest in this came? Because he saw it happen?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: He was an attorney, wasn't he?

Grunewald: Yes, he was an attorney. During the summertime, that was just a side-line.

BM: Because those two things don't seem to go together.

Grunewald: No, that was a side-line of his which he enjoyed very much. As I say, he was over there every summer and conducting these tours. He would take people out there in the morning. He did a lot more than the average tour conductor did. Those that wanted to go, he would take them out to maybe Munich, Hamburg, or someplace. Some larger city. People wanted to get up around 6:30 or 7:00 and want you to take them out and take them downtown, and take them over to a flower market or something special that way.

He saw the advantages of how those flower markets operated there

and he felt that it was something that Cedar Rapids could use here. And of course they did.

BM: Did he conduct any of these tours when you were a boy? Did you remember him going?

Grunewald: Yes, I was over with him in 1922.

BM: Let's stop right there and let me ask you--you were fifteen, how big a tour was it? How many people went?

Grunewald: At that time I think there were—I think just three of us: Mrs. Theodore Stark and Mrs. Brimms, who had the Brimm's Bakery on First Street there, and a couple of ladies from Blairstown. There was five, six, seven of us in the party there.

BM: Was the itinerary left up to your father? Where to go, and when and how?

Grunewald: Yes, it was more or less on his own. In fact, that year was an unusual experience. The two Catholics in there, Theodore Stark--it may be referred that he was a very prominent contractor here in Cedar Rapids, in fact, I think he built the Paramount Theatre, and I'm not sure but I think it was the Paramount Theatre he built and other buildings in town.

They, of course, were very strong Catholics and they wanted to have an audience with Pope Pius. So we got letters from the Congressman vouching that we were honorable people. We went over there that summer and we got to shake hands with the Pope.

BM: This is interesting, so your father shook hands with Hitler and shook hands with Pope Pius. That's quite a spectrum. As a 15-year-old kid from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, tell me about it.

Grunewald: It was quite a thrill!

BM: You say this was a small group and you would be gone for two weeks?

Grunewald: No, we were gone about a month.

BM: Tell me what travel arrangements there were? How did you get there?

Gruenwald: We took--at that time the planes weren't there--we took ships going over both ways. Of course, in Europe, we took the trains--part of the time. And in the cities where they had tours we took the tour busses.

BM: What do you remember about--you obviously took the train from here back to Chicago and perhaps Chicago to New York, and then to . . . What do you remember about the train ride?

Grunewald: It was wonderful. I hated to see them go. Really, I think riding a train and even dining on the train was one of the most excellent experiences you could have. We took the Northwestern Chicago and then the Pennsylvania Railroad from Chicago to New York. From New York--that was the time we went from New York--the other time we went from Montreal and sailed from Montreal, the harbor there. We came back by way of New York then. Both times we came back by way of New York.

BM: This, of course, would have been a steam ocean liner that you would have taken?

Grunewald: Yes. It wasn't a big one, I think the Andini was the one we sailed on, the Cunard Line. All the Cunard Line was . . . That was a thrill. Of course, the first time we went, we went in the first part of April, April 15. Of course, when we left

from Montreal we crossed the iceberg section where you could see icebergs start coming down. We saw icebergs--I saw one--I think it must have been a mile long and, I don't know, probably twenty stories high. It was just as white as the sea gulls, the sea gulls actually looked black on the ice there--it was such a glaring white. Of course they kept taking--I don't know how far we were from it, I suppose. But they'd take temperature readings very frequently. Especially when we got into the section where the bergs started coming down--you could tell about how close they were getting to icebergs. You don't meddle with those!

BM: How long did the crossing take, do you remember?

Grunewald: That time I think it took us about a week, seven or eight days, I think. That time I think we went to, let's see, Cherbourg, France, and I think we went across the channel to South Hampton. Both times we landed in England. And both times we took off from Hamburg, Germany, to come home.

BM: Tell me what you remember about the audience with the Pope?

Gruenwald: The Vatican, of course, is right off St. Peter's Square. We went to the door there. I think we went through about ten sets of Swiss Guards before we finally got up to the floor where he was in the rooms. They had, I suppose, about half a dozen rooms separated from the others right then and there. They were connected by doors in between. We were to form a half circle around from door-to-door from each side. The Pope came in from one end there and shook hands with everybody and went around the circle, and went out into the next

room. He gave a blessing, of course, to each one. He wore a signet ring, and I think Catholics always like to kiss the signet ring. But he had a beautiful white robe on when I saw him.

BM: For a Lutheran boy from Cedar Rapids that's quite an experience. And you say that this audience was set up through your Congressman?

Grunewald: I think our Catholic friends wrote to the Vatican. And in connection with that, we had to get letters from our Congressman vouching that we were reliable people.

BM: Back to your family a little bit, your mother didn't come along with you on this tour?

Grunewald: My mother wasn't along at that time, no. She was along in 1925.

BM: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Grunewald: No, I'm the only one--I'm sorry to say. (Laughter)

BM: On the other hand, there are some benefits to being the only child.

Grunewald: I suppose there are, yes.

BM: Tell me about your experiences in Italy when you were over there?

Grunewald: It was 1922, when they had the revolution in Italy. As I say, our train was the first train into Florence in four days which was a city of about a half-million population--so you can see how things were tied up. When we got off the train, there were no streetcars running or no taxis. Well, I guess there were some taxis, that's all that was running. They didn't shut down.

BM: Were you frightened?

Grunewald: No, not especially, I didn't feel frightened but I was curious.

BM: Probably because you were fifteen and fifteen-year-olds aren't smart enough to be frightened!

Grunewald: No, I suppose! But we had armored cars here and there running around. I think it was about two weeks later when Mussolini marched on Rome and took the country over. But it was an exciting time there. I think when we went through Bologna, Italy, on the way down, there were eleven people killed in riots that day that we went through there. It was some time during the day.

BM: What did the ladies from Blairstown think when suddenly they were in the middle of a revolution?

Grunewald: They stayed pretty calm, but it was a little nerve-racking. In fact we were in a cathedral in Florence one of those days there. The walls were about 20-feet thick and you couldn't hear a thing from the outside. When we opened the doors then we heard shouting and screaming from the outside. We didn't have any idea what was going on.

Some man, Italian, that talked English said, "You better go down this street as soon as you can, there's going to be some trouble here." So we gathered about twenty-some women at that time--a bunch of school teachers. We walked down out of the cathedral and went down, and across the next street we saw about a hundred of these Fascists coming down the street with their billy clubs in military formation marching towards us there. I imagine there was probably a riot or a street fight there in

the next hour or half an hour from then. But that was typical of the whole country then. It was very unstable. It was exciting, but we were sort of glad to get out of the country at that time.

BM: How long did your father do these tours?

Grunewald: I think the last tour he took was 1934, I think. The Depression hit there in 1930 and 1931, and people just couldn't afford to take European tours very much. So I think the tour business pretty much went out. He was actually there--he must have went over about 15 times altogether.

BM: And all for Pratt tours?

Grunewald: Yes. All except one summer that my mother and I were along and he had his own group there. The group that saw the Pope, that was just a small group there and that was just his own party.

BM: What did your friends think about your going off on a trip like that? That's certainly not a usual trip to be able to take?

Grunewald: Well, no. They never said too much. It was in the paper, about my getting a trip for a graduation present. I suppose most of them envied me although I don't think some people are really that anxious to travel in Europe anyway. It doesn't mean that much to them.

BM: Especially then?

Gruenwald: No.

BM: Let's go back to Cedar Rapids a little bit, although it's tempting to stay in Europe! What were your parents' names? We haven't even mentioned them.

Grunewald: My father was a William also, William John and mine is William P.--Pratt. I was named after the minister that conducted these tours, Dr. William Pratt. My mother's name was Emma Christina.

BM: And her maiden name?

Grunewald: Stump. Her father was a carpenter.

BM: You attended Madison School, which is no longer in existence?

Grunewald: No. That's right. Well, it's in existence but not as a school. The school, I guess there's a Madison School on the west side but not that particular building.

I could have gone to Grant, either had a choice at that time of going to Grant or Washington. Of course, Grant was a vocational school at that time. I was more interested in the general topics so I went to Washington. Of course, I had to walk across the river to get there. They didn't have busses at that time.

BM: Where was your family home? What was the address?

Grunewald: Well, when I was going to school, it was on Second Avenue West, near the west side. Well, we never lived very far off. I was born in 209 A Avenue which at the present time is under about twenty feet of dirt along the expressway there.

BM: Is the house on Second Avenue still there?

Grunewald: Yes, that's still existing. In those days, downtown on Saturday night was a pretty busy night. They had the stores open Saturday nights in those days. All the grocery store dealers and meat markets and shopping bergs. I'd put my roller skates on and skate downtown. I was always anxious for my folks to say, "Well, I'd like

to get something downtown," so I could have an excuse to get down.

BM: What do you remember about your early school days, elementary days? You would have started school--you were born in 1907?

Grunewald: Yes, I started in about 1913 or 1914. Miss Swim was principal of the grade school at that time.

BM: There was a woman principal?

Grunewald: Yes, she was a very strict principal--she was a very good principal, though. Incidentally, I remember several of the people--Earl Reick was one of my classmates, and Tony Nassau. They used to have--his folks used to have a fruit market where the Roosevelt Hotel is now.

One of the things I remember about school is he was getting into some kind of trouble and Miss Swimm was giving him a flogging and you could hear him yelling clear outside the building.

BM: Because he was being punished?

Grunewald: Punished, yes.

BM: Was that a usual thing to have happen? Did kids get caned at school?

Grunewald: No, I don't remember ever hearing of that before or since, actually. That's an unusual . . .

BM: How many kids were in a classroom? Do you remember? Like in third or fourth grade, along about the time that you started having memories of that? Twenty, twenty-five, thirty?

Grunewald: No, there weren't that many. I don't think classes were that big. I would say more like fifteen maybe, at the most.

BM: If you take a year, say your sixth-grade year. You would have been eleven or twelve. Tell me what subjects you studied. Did you specifically study English, history, geography, war? I know that's kind of rough.

Grunewald: I suppose we had geography and things. I could tell you more about high school than I can tell you about junior high. I took journalism in high school.

One of my assignments in journalism in high school was to interview Grant Wood. So I went over to his studio when he had his studio up above Turner Mortuary at that time, and talked.

BM: In high school?

Grunewald: That was in high school.

BM: And you wrote up the interview?

Grunewald: Yes, I think it was in the Gazette, I believe.

BM: What were your impressions of him?

Grunewald: He was a very nice person, I thought.

BM: This would have been when?

Grunewald: About 1924, I think it would have been. I think it was about a year or two before he moved down to Iowa City.

BM: Was he considered famous beyond this particular area at that time, do you know?

Grunewald: He was fairly well-known. I don't think he was as well-known outside as he is now of course. Not nationally known, I think.

BM: What do you think his opinion was of being interviewed by a a high school kid?

Grunewald: Well, he was very gracious. He didn't mind it really.

BM: What kind of things did you talk about?

Grunewald: I think I talked about where he studied. I think he studied in Europe. (Pause) I tell you, things get away from you soon. I remember his studio was very comfortable-looking up there. He was up in the attic of the Turner garage there.

BM: Was he working on anything in particular at the time, do you remember?

Grunewald: No, I don't remember any picture or anything he was working on at that time. Of course, that was back in 1923. (Pause) He wasn't as well-known at that time. I think people didn't associate his pictures at that time.

BM: He was a pretty young man. You wouldn't have been that much older than he, really.

Grunewald: Possibly not.

BM: You say that you chose to go to Washington because it had the curriculum that you wanted?

Grunewald: There was a larger curriculum. In other words, there was more vocational make-up. And in the trades.

BM: And you were planning on college?

Grunewald: Yes, I was.

BM: Tell me about Washington. Where was it?

Grunewald: There is a big vacant space there now. It was right across the street from Union Station between Fourth and Fifth Avenue, right across the tracks there. It took practically the whole block from Fourth Street up to Fifth Street there.

BM: And you used to walk to high school every day?

Grunewald: Yes, I walked to school every day.

BM: And walked home?

Grunewald: Yes. I remember one of the things--I remember, of course, the railroad was prominent in those days. I remember--maybe in the wintertime--there would be three passenger trains sitting there waiting to go off to the Union Station, their chimneys puffing, you know. It was quite an interesting place there at that time. I think one of the mistakes that Cedar Rapids made was that they should have preserved the old Union Station. I think it would have been a beautiful thing.

BM: I have heard a lot of people talk about that. Do you have memories of the building being lovely?

Grunewald: Oh, yes. It was very pretty. The ceilings were very high, it was quite a pretentious-looking building. The waiting rooms there, they had a tower on it and it must have been 40 or 50 feet at least, up to the ceilings in the main floor. And, of course, there were dining rooms and restaurants down on the Third Avenue end of it there.

It took up the whole--between the whole project, the station, the restaurant, and the bar, the baggage area--took up the whole--not from Third Avenue--I would say a good block and a half, I would guess.

BM: What kind of restaurant did they have? Was there a variety of them? Was there a dining room?

Grunewald: They just had one dining room there.

BM: Was it a place where people from Cedar Rapids went to eat out?

Grunewald: You could. It was more--I'm not even sure they had tables there. I think it was more of a stool, bar-type thing there as I recall.

BM: When you were a boy, did you and your family go out to eat dinner? Where would you go?

Grunewald: Well, we didn't really go out much to eat dinner.

BM: It wasn't that much of a tradition?

Grunewald: No, it wasn't. In fact I don't--I think the only times I can remember we went down to the Colonies. That was when they were still into the communistic system. We ate in communal kitchen there.

BM: People could go down and do that?

Grunewald: Well, I don't know, we could. My father knew, I think the superintendent, the head man of the Colonies at that time. I suppose anybody could have if they had wanted to. But it wasn't really public. It was pretty much private.

BM: What are your memories of that occasion?

Grunewald: It was very simple there. Of course, in those days--that must have been--I suppose--I wasn't even a senior yet at that time. It seems a long time ago.

BM: I've seen pictures of people sitting at long tables and . . .

Grunewald: Yes, I think that's the way they did. I think it was more or less like a big family affair there.

BM: And you drove down in the car?

Grunewald: I think we must have. (Pause) I think possibly my uncle must have driven us. At that time, we didn't have a car. My uncle, I think, might have driven.

BM: Do you have any other memories of going down to the Colonies? You say your father was acquainted with the superintendent down there?

Grunewald: Not an awful lot more. They didn't have the shops that they have now. The commercial element wasn't there at all, really. In fact, I don't even think they had any as I recall. They may have had one store but they didn't have any--they weren't really catering to tourists so much at that time. I don't think they had any tourist trade to amount to anything. Because, as I say, this was pretty much a personal invitation from one of the directors down there to our family. But it was nice, though.

BM: When did your family get their first car?

Grunewald: Let's see. Our first car was, I think, an old water-cooled Franklin. Have you ever seen those?

BM: Yes I have. Was it purchased here in town?

Grunewald: No, my father bought it from his brother. His brother had it and he decided to get another car and so my father bought his. I think that was the year when we went up to--in fact, I learned to drive a car with the old Franklin. I wasn't driving too long and my father decided--well, my uncle and my father wanted to go up to northern Minnesota, so I drove the car.

BM: You drove that Franklin to northern Minnesota?

Grunewald: Yes. It stood up real well though. We didn't have any problems with it.

BM: How old were you when you learned to drive?

Grunewald: I think I must have been about sixteen, I suppose, or seventeen anyway. Maybe I was a little older than that possibly. I must have been at least seventeen. But I didn't have any problems along the way, though. I've always enjoyed driving.

BM: Let's get back to school a little bit. You finished up at

Washington High School?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: And then you graduated--in what year would it have been?

Grunewald: As I said, I could have been graduated in 1924, but of course, going to Europe I missed out. I didn't get any school until the middle of the first semester one year. So I stayed back a year and took an extra half year. So I went there four and a half years. I was graduated in 1925. Then I started at Coe in 1925, and graduated there in 1929.

BM: Why did you choose to go to Coe?

Grunewald: I suppose, for one thing, it was close and I could live at home. It was probably one of the principal reasons, although I knew Coe was a good school. Of course, I was over to Coe College quite a bit because I took violin lessons because of Kitchen there for a number of years.

Marshall Hall--I don't know if Marshall Hall is still there or not. I think it's gone. That was right in the middle of the campus.

BM: So you felt like Coe was the place for you?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: What career plans did you have when you started, or what did you develop as you . . .?

Grunewald: I had majored in English and journalism. I was always interested in journalism and English, too.

BM: You were involved with the school paper, right?

Grunewald: Yes, I was reporter one year, and news editor two years.

BM: For the Coe Cosmos?

Grunewald: Yes. I knew Tom Powell real well. I think Artie Poldervaart died. He was such a student. He was very industrious. We were over there, I don't know how he got along with the amount of sleep he did. I don't think that fellow slept more than three hours a night while we were going to Coe. Of course, a lot of us didn't get too much more sleep than that during the school year either.

I think we usually got out of there about 3:00 in the morning when we were working on the Cosmos, about two nights a week.

BM: I know about the Cosmos a little bit. I know that they printed downtown.

Grunewald: A very good paper.

BM: How did you have them printed up then? How did you distribute it and all that?

Grunewald: Originally, when they first started out, it was printed by the Superior Press up on First Avenue and Tenth Street.

BM: The Superior Press was still printing in 1968 when my husband was editor.

Grunewald: All I can remember was--I think it was Tom--had the press pages all set up, you know. He was coming down the steps from the printing and all of a sudden it tipped and fell and the whole thing fell to the floor! (Laughter) So the front page had to be done over.

BM: Hand set?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: Did you have any illustrations, photographs? Did they do those at that time?

Grunewald: No, we didn't do much in the way of illustrations or that kind of thing.

BM: How often did it come out?

Grunewald: Once a week.

BM: That's a lot of hard work. I'd like to talk to you a little bit about Coe memories. Tell me about the student body. Was it largely people from Cedar Rapids, largely people from Iowa? Were there folks from elsewhere?

Grunewald: It was possibly more from Cedar Rapids, I think, maybe, than there is now. It maybe wasn't quite as well-known as it is now, internationally. Of course, at that time we had a number of foreign students. The year I was President of the Cosmopolitan but I don't know whether they still have that or not.

BM: What is the Cosmopolitan?

Grunewald: It was a club organized to give the foreign students a social life. We met and had meetings and parties.

BM: What would foreign students be doing at Coe, for instance?

Grunewald: They were studying. I don't know exactly which courses. I suppose something like they are now. I would say English and political science and so forth.

BM: Did most of the kids stay on in Cedar Rapids or go home? Do you know? Did you keep up any friendships?

Grunewald: Well, not an awful lot of friendships. Of course, Tom went on to be publisher of the Monticello paper there. And Art Poldervaart went out to New Mexico. He was a journalist out there--he died, I think, several years ago.

Little Eliza Hickock--is she married now or not? She was going

with Louis Burkeholter at that time. She married this chemist--officer of Penick and Ford. He was injured and died in an accident. He fell on the ice. Eliza Hickok and Tom...

BM: How big of a student body was it at that time?

Grunewald: I don't know. I would guess about seven hundred or eight hundred at that time. It was pretty good size at that time.

BM: Tell me a little bit about the social life on the campus. I know men didn't live on campus at that time because there was no room for it.

Grunewald: There was a fraternity house on the corner of Third Avenue and Twelfth Street. And two of them next door to that, next door to each other. One of my jobs as a reporter there on the staff was to go over and get some information from one of the members. I went over, it must have been about 10:30 at night and they were going strong there in the fraternity house! (Laughter)

SIDE 2 OF TAPE I BEGINS HERE

BM: Mr. Grunewald, we were talking about social life at Coe. You were saying that there were fraternity houses and there would be parties there. What kinds of hours and things did the women have at that time? What restrictions were there on female students, do you happen to remember?

Grunewald: Well, I never dated any of the girls in college, so I don't know what time they actually had to get in for sure. I presume they had some hours there, sometime.

BM: Was there an "Acorn Beauty" then?

Grunewald: Oh, yes. Every year they had an "Acorn Beauty". I remember Mrs. Bill Whippel was one back in 1930, I think it was.

BM: As editor of the paper, did you have anything to do with choosing the "Acorn Beauty"?

Grunewald: No, I didn't have any part of that. I think it was the staff of the Acorn that was probably interested in that. That was at Coe College and at.... No, we didn't have anything to do with that. I was music critic for the paper a couple of years, to write up the concerts.

BM: The Coe concerts or the other ones around town?

Grunewald: They were like the community concerts. Any of the shows that came into town.

BM: Before we go further at Coe, do you have any special memories of any particular professors or anything that had an impact on your life?

Grunewald: My favorite subjects, of course, were economics and sociology so I enjoyed Professor Garwood. I'm not sure if he's living yet or not. Professor C. Ward Macy was economics. And Professor Ward in English, I remember I used to like to hear him read poetry, he was so good at it. He was a very fatherly professor. Then I had Miss Oppleman. She was, of course, very strict. She was professor of journalism at that time.

BM: What other extra-curricular things were you involved with besides the paper, or did that eat up all your time?

Grunewald: I was on the Cosmopolitan Club, I was an officer in that. I was in the Coe College orchestra when I was there.

BM: What did you play in the orchestra?

Grunewald: The violin. We played on stage. We practiced and rehearsed--right on the stage--of the old Coe College Chapel, at that time.

BM: Who was the conductor?

Grunewald: Professor Kitchen was still the conductor--at that time he was there all the time. He was my violin teacher, also.

BM: Did you play any place outside the Cedar Rapids area?

Grunewald: Do you mean the orchestra?

BM: Yes, the orchestra.

Grunewald: No, the orchestra--the Coe chorus never played outside of the college community.

BM: How about you personally? Did you play any place outside?

Grunewald: I played with the St. Paul Sunday school orchestra. One time they gave a concert. I had my own Sunday school orchestra there at the Lutheran church for a number of years. We played for the different social events there for the church. Then, of course, I started with the symphony in 1923, I played with them for a few years.

BM: I do want to talk about the symphony. I want to talk about your whole music background a little bit later on because that's interesting.

You were talking about the parties that you used to have with the Cosmopolitan Club. Would you describe those? What do you remember about the way they were? Who came, what were the refreshments like, where did you have them?

Grunewald: Let's see, well, we played there at the games. I can't think of any particular ones. We played a great number of different games.

BM: Like charades?

Grunewald: Charades and stuff like that. I think we had some of the girls

bring refreshments, or something special.

BM: Like what? Cookies?

Grunewald: Cookies or something light. But it was the only social outlet that some of those foreign students had. It was very nice for them. I don't know whether the Cosmopolitan Club is operating now or not.

BM: I don't think so.

Grunewald: Too bad, in a way, because they have more foreign students there now than they ever did.

BM: Well, I'm sure . . .

Gruenwald: Some other organization probably . . .

BM: It's probably under some other name. You know how those things change over the years.

Grunewald: That's very likely. I'm sure they'd need some kind of outlet for those people.

BM: What about other social events at Coe, formals and flunk-days? Do you have flunk-day memories that you can share with us?

Grunewald: Yes. I went out one time with my girlfriend there when we had a flunk-day picnic. We never knew until almost the last minute whether we were going to have a flunk-day or not. They usually came out real early in the morning of the day it should be. They like to keep you guessing.

BM: That's right. And the president of the student body goes out and rings the victory bell, right?

Grunewald: I suppose, they didn't have a victory bell at that time. But generally we had pretty good luck. Once in a while we'd hit a rainy day or something.

BM: What would you do on flunk-day?

Grunewald: Most of them probably went out to the beach or canoeing or were outside somewhere for the day.

BM: You would have been in college during prohibition years, right?

Grunewald: Yes, 1922 to 1925 or 1926.

BM: Everybody loves prohibition stories. Tell us what you remember about prohibition and drinking or not drinking, or the law or trouble or scrapes that people would get into. Do you have any memories of that?

Grunewald: I can't just tell you off-hand. Of course, I never went out. I guess about the only extra-curricular activity I had was the Coe College paper there, and other things. I never really went out with a gang like some of them would have done, probably, to get drink somewhere.

BM: Did you hear about people drinking, though?

Grunewald: I have, yes. I can't pinpoint any particular point of time, but I'm sure there were--human beings being what they are.

BM: Were there any notorious places here in town that was sort of known that you could get gin if you wanted it, or whatever?

Grunewald: Gosh, I'm not sure if I could tell you right off-hand of any that I can think of.

BM: Let's talk about a little more up-lifting entertainment. Let's talk about some of the other shows that might have come through town, particular artists that you might have seen as a young man here. I know that Cedar Rapids was on the circuit and there have been some famous people in here. Do you have any memories?

Grunewald: Yes, Greene's Opera House and The Majestic Theatre, both.

Greene's earlier.

BM: Do you remember seeing anyone in particular?

Grunewald: Well, I remember the Cherry Sisters. One time I went to see them, you've probably heard of them.

BM: Absolutely. Were they really as awful as everybody says?

Grunewald: Well, just about!

BM: Was it a tongue-in-cheek kind of awful? Everybody sort of dimly liked it then?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: You didn't throw anything, did you?

Grunewald: No, I wasn't among the throwers. I'm sure there's enough of them around, though.

BM: Did they play at the Majestic or at the Greene Opera House?

Grunewald: I think they played at both of them. I think Greene's was earlier and that was closed earlier. I think they played at the Majestic in the later years, more.

BM: Who else was there?

Grunewald: I heard John Phillip Sousa's band one time.

BM: Where did they play?

Grunewald: They played at the Majestic, I think. It was quite a thrill.

BM: You're going to have to forgive my ignorance, but he wasn't with them, was he? Or was he?

Grunewald: Yes, I think he was at that time.

BM: Really?

Grunewald: Yes, he was at that time. I'm quite sure he was with them at that time.

BM: He was conducting?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: They must have brought the rafters down!

Grunewald: Oh, yes! It was very good. One of the other experiences I had was when Madame Schumann Heink was here.

BM: I'm sorry, who?

Grunewald: Madame Schumann Heink. You ever hear of her?

BM: I'm afraid not.

Grunewald: She was a great contralto. She sang in the old Coe College Chapel.

BM: Would you spell that for me because I think that's my own ignorance.

Grunewald: S-c-h-u-m-a-n-n, I think is like Schumann; and then H-e-i-n, I think its a k. It's H-e-i-n-k.

BM: And she was a contralto.

Grunewald: Yes, and she was very well-known at that time; a beautiful voice. She sang at the old Chapel.

An interesting thing was, my mother and I went to see her at that time ourselves, and we sat at the end of the choir loft in the back of the Chapel there. They had about a hundred seats back there. They were the cheapest seats in the house so we took two of those.

So we sat back there. And during the concert then, she--of course, I think most of us were mostly school teachers, you know, people that were professional people and didn't have a lot of money to spend like some--it wasn't just a bash you know. She realized that, I think, so she turned right around completely with her back to the main audience and

sang her best number, which was quite a thrill.

After the concert I got a chance to go up on the stage and shake hands with her.

Speaking about shaking hands, I shook hands with Paderewski, too. It was one of the most famous hands I've ever shaken!

BM: It was a very famous hand. I hope you didn't squeeze it too hard!

Grunewald: No, I was a little afraid of that.

BM: Where was this?

Grunewald: That was up in Cedar Falls. A friend of mine--he's passed away now--he was a very fine piano player and he wanted someone to go with him. So he and I went up to Cedar Falls. It was at the auditorium or whatever--no, the gymnasium, I guess--was where they had the concert.

So he played his recital and after the concert, of course, Wendell wanted to go up and see and talk to him--see him. He got out; we found out where he had slipped out, and he had his private car back there, parked near the building--a passenger car. So we sneaked out and got to the car. I I think we were the only ones that got to shake hands with him after the concert.

BM: The thought of being able to walk up to Paderewski and shake his hand, that's wonderful! How big a deal was it to go to Cedar Falls at that time? This would have been in the 1920's?

Grunewald: No, it was a little later than that. It wasn't too bad. I drove up there at that time. It wasn't too bad. But it was

quite a thrill to shake hands with him.

BM: What about other people that came through town that you remember seeing?

Grunewald: Well, Mrs. Roosevelt. I got to shake hands with her, too, at the end--as she went out of--just after she left the auditorium. Right next to the back door, you might say. I think we were one of the few that did shake hands with her because she left the stage and went out the back way.

BM: Eleanor Roosevelt you're talking about?

Grunewald: Eleanor. And we knew she was going out the back entrance there. I think she had the car back there or something. So I think we were one of the very few who did get to shake hands with her.

BM: What was she doing in town?

Grunewald: She gave a talk at that time, a speech.

BM: Obviously at the time her husband was President. What did she speak about?

Grunewald: Oh, what was the speech? It was a general topic. I can't remember any particular topic she spoke on at that time. It was quite a thrill to meet her and shake hands with her.

And talking about presidents, I also got to shake hands with John Kennedy. He was still senator but he was going to be running for president that year. That was in the summer of the year he was elected president.

We went into Washington that summer, just on a trip, and we went to see Congress. We found out that he was doing an address there at the Congress when we were there. Then after that we wanted to know where his office was. So we got to see his

office, we went up to his office in the office building there, and got to visit with him.

BM: Back to the twenties a little bit. We've talked about live entertainment that came through, the Cherry Sisters. Talk about sublime to the ridiculous--Paderewski and the Cherry Sisters! But what about movie theatres? Did you go to the movies alot?

Grunewald: No, not too often. Of course there weren't too many--well there were movie theatres in the earlier days. Downtown, of course, we had--there were three on First Avenue there: the Rialto, the Columbia, and the Crystal Theatre. The Crystal became the Rialto, so actually the Crystal and the Columbia on First Avenue. The Isis was a popular theatre on Second Avenue. And, of course, the Strand on Third Avenue, and the Colonial Threatre was on the west side there next to the food market on Third Avenue west, by First Street.

BM: Did your parents not like you to go to movies?

Grunewald: No, they didn't mind. Of course, in those days you just didn't go to as many movies as we do now. But they didn't have anything against movies. They allowed me to go if if was a good movie, especially.

BM: Do you have any memories of anything that you really enjoyed when you were younger? A movie that you saw that you have always remembered from time to time?

Grunewald: Well, one thing I can remember is when the talkies first came out, the talking movies. They didn't have a movie, all they had was a man standing on the railroad tracks and you could

hear a train coming up in the background. You could hear that train puffing and then he stood aside and let the train go through. That was the first time we ever heard sound in a movie theatre.

BM: So it was a short?

Grunewald: It was short, yes, very short!

BM: In addition to the regular bill?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: I suppose they had to get special equipment at the movie theatres?

Grunewald: I'm sure they did. They had to get a lot of new equipment for that.

BM: Do you remember that changing all of that quite a lot, talkies coming in? Was that a big deal or didn't you pay that much attention?

Grunewald: Well, it was quite a deal there, the talkies were interesting. Although I don't think our family was as much a movie-going family as a lot of families are probably. But I know the movies, and talkies are very interesting.

BM: Let's talk a little bit about--you finished at Coe in 1925?

Grunewald: I got my Bachelor's degree in 1925.

BM: Then what did you decide to do?

Grunewald: I went to the University of Iowa, in fact I took an extra year of study there. Of course in those days things were pretty tight financially. So I didn't go down to the University the next year, I went down to Iowa then. I got to work on a Master's in English. I took courses there from Norman Foerster--

I don't know whether he's still there or not. He's one of of the exponents of Greek literature, famous exponent of Greek literature at that time.

BM: Was that something that you had a particular interest in, or were there . . .?

Grunewald: No, I got interested in it more or less because of Norman Foerster I think, because of the way he presented it and the enthusiasm he had about it. I think that made everyone enthusiastic about it.

BM: What year did you matriculate? It would have been . . .?

Grunewald: Well that would have been 1933 I guess.

BM: So in between there, you didn't crash!

Grunewald: Right during the Depression. During the crash there, I didn't go to school. I did some collections for a company there, real estate, and managed some real estate a couple of places for some people. Of course, there wasn't much of anything to do in those days.

BM: Let's talk about that a little bit because there was quite a lot of prosperity here during the twenties, and then suddenly the crash hit like a freight train. What memories do you have of that particular October when that happened?

Grunewald: At the time of the crash I would have been only twelve years old. That particular week, that afternoon in October, I guess it was 1929, didn't impress me as much as it would have if it had been five years later. I'd been through some things. After, really, in the years following, I realized the impact of it more than I did at that time. But I remember of course,

the vacancies downtown: for rent signs, the vacant store rooms, houses for rent, during those years, 1933 and 1934. Things were really down in the depth of the Depression there. Then I remember--see, Roosevelt was, it was 1936, he was elected, wasn't he?

BM: He was elected in 1932.

Grunewald: 1932, that's right. Well in the spring of 1933, we drove to Ohio. We went there in the summer to visit my grandfather in Canton. You went by shops and no cars parked around, everything was completely dead. The shops were closed up.
And then the next year, the year later, when Roosevelt got into power and started the New Deal into operation, after that he received more cars, more cars there the first year and the next year more. You could just see that prosperity. You could see new roofs being put on barns and remodelling being done. Stuff that hadn't been done for years. You could just see that current of prosperity going through the country there. The money, the feeling of that surge.

BM: During those first few dark days of the Depression, was there any particular impact on your family, do you remember?

Grunewald: Of course, my father was always very frugal. He never plunged into anything. We had a very simple home there, so I don't think we felt the Depression because we had always lived a pretty simple life, I think. We never felt the Depression like some people who were used to flying high.

BM: Did you lose money in the crash?

Grunewald: No, my father really never lost any money, actually. Because

I think he had some in building and loans, but I don't think he had that much in the bank. There really wasn't anything spectacular at all in that respect--like so many people did.

BM: That sounds fortunate.

Grunewald: Yes, we were fortunate.

BM: You said that during this you did a little real estate work and did collection work in between the time?

Grunewald: Collecting rentals was mostly what it was.

BM: How did that go? During those early years of the Depression that must have been a hard job?

Grunewald: It was. You had to make several calls before you'd get the rent most of the time. And yet, of course, you didn't dare actually turn them out. If you gave them a notice to move you'd have an empty house and you wouldn't have anything coming in and no possibility of anything. So we strung them along and tried to keep them halfway afloat there as much as we could until things got better.

BM: Who did you work for at this time?

Grunewald: At that time I was with a private party that lived out of town and had several apartments here. I was collecting rents for him. Then I was with Hatfield Realtors most of the time. In my earlier years in real estate, C. M. Hatfield had a business at that time. I was with him a number of years. And then I went with John Zacher, I was with him for about twenty-five years.

BM: So you've really worked in real estate all the way?

Grunewald: Yes, I've been in real estate practically all of my life.

BM: What made you decide to go back to the University of Iowa?

Was it something that you were always going to do once you got the money saved up or you wanted a career change?

Grunewald: I don't know, I just wanted to--at that time in 1932, there didn't seem to be any opportunities to do anything. I was in a position where I could get down to the University. The room there, I think, was $10 a week. The expenses weren't that much in comparison so I decided that was about the best thing I could do rather than--there were no jobs, they were practically nil at that time.

BM: And what did you study in your masters?

Grunewald: I studied economics and sociology. I also majored in English and journalism. I had four fields there. I thought some of them were going into journalism but I just felt the journalism was--the type of work I would be doing would be--well my folks were old, elderly people and I didn't know how much I would have to go out of town or anything like that, or be away from home, odd hours and so on like that. I would be better not to get into something like that.

BM: You had a hiatus, you were out working between the two times that you were a student. What did you notice in the difference in the change in attitudes, like on campuses. Because the crash came in between there so there was really quite a social change. Did you notice the difference in the attitudes among the students or people's plans or the number of students that there were or anything like that?

Grunewald: As I recall, the enrollment in 1930 dropped down quite a bit. In 1930 and 1931 I think were the deepest and most discouraging

years of the Depression, I think. There didn't seem to be much hope. I think in 1932 and 1933 when Roosevelt came into office and they started a different attack toward the Depression, I think that's when things began looking up. There was more encouragement there to get things done.

BM: We've been hearing a lot these days about the farm economy and the plight of the farmers. What do you remember about the plight of the farm economy here around Cedar Rapids in the early 1930's?

Grunewald: The farmers in those days were quite similar to those today. I think that's one reason why I can't understand why the people in positions of power don't realize the symptoms. They don't realize that things could do the same thing over again. The farm economy is really important to the country.

Of course, in those days, the corn was selling for about ten cents a bushel. In fact, they didn't even sell their corn, they burned it for fuel because it was cheaper than burning coal.

BM: Didn't you tell me that some of your relatives kept a farm out at Blairstown?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: How did they see it through then?

Grunewald: Fortunately they were out of debt, for one thing. They didn't owe anything on it and they had two sons there, grown sons, and they didn't have to hire any help. They had a big enough operation that they could squeeze through you might say. Otherwise they probably would have gone down the drain with a lot of others.

BM: I know that you and your family were familiar with Democratic politics. Keeping that in mind, tell me about the change in feeling between the Hoover administration and the Roosevelt administration because we did have change going on there. What was the whole feeling of that? Were people glad to see Hoover go even though he was an Iowa president?

Grunewald: Yes, I think they were. People never thought--the connection between Iowa and Hoover wasn't as nearly as close as it is now. (Laughter) He might have been born here but the feeling, I think, of most of them was that he had deserted the people back home. I think they felt that we could just feel that surge inside after Roosevelt administration took over, and Tugwell and some of the others, the ideas that they had--C.C.C.[2] and some of the different things that were put into operation. You could see the economy just going right up out of the ground. It was amazing.

BM: What were some of the feelings about Roosevelt around town? Not everybody thought he was too good. Some people were very unhappy with his government plans.

Grunewald: Well, I don't know.

BM: Did you hear alot about that?

Grunewald: I never heard an awful lot about that really. I think they--of course, I know around Cedar Rapids it's probably been more nominally Republican. Even here, I think the people got to the point there where they were willing to try almost anything to get someplace else. I think they went along with the program and felt it was the only hope they had, really.

BM: What about the bank holiday? Do you remember anything about that? You were pretty young then.

Grunewald: I remember that, it was 1932 or 1933. I guess it was 1933.

BM: Right, because he would have inaugurated. . .

Grunewald: In March of 1933. I remember that very well. I remember going downtown and some of the banks had already closed. The Cornbelt, I think, had already closed its doors. Merchant's Bank--I remember going into Merchant's Bank and Mr. Hamilton was standing out there--I don't know if they still have those tables, marble-topped tables in the lobby. He was standing on the top of the table there and saying, "Come and get your money, we've got your money if you want it."

They had probably four or five hundred people in ther looking. . . watching. . .

BM: This was before the bank holiday?

Grunewald: Yes, before the holiday. Because they were still open at that time. It was quite a day, that day.

BM: Did a lot of people go down and take their money out?

Grunewald: I think there were, yes. The town was full of people. It was like a Saturday night downtown, really. As I say, the people were drawing their money out. But I think it's safe to say that some of those that went in there, and probably after listening to him, I suppose they decided to just go on back home.

BM: And who was this that you talked with?

Grunewald: Jim Hamilton, he was the president of the bank at that time. I don't think he's living now, I think he's gone. I'm quite

sure it was Jim Hamilton that was there at that time.

BM: If I may ask, what did you do with your money? Did you keep it or did you take it home?

Grunewald: No, I didn't have that much, actually. I had a little bit in the building and loan, but I didn't have any in the bank. I had some in the building and loan but it wasn't enough, really, to worry that much about. I think the Guarantee Bank--not the Guarantee, but the Cedar Rapids Savings Bank--had already closed, and the Cornbelt had closed, and the Iowa State Bank on the west side had closed. I think the People's and the Merchant's were the only two banks that were ever open at that time. Of course they--I never got over to the People's Bank to see if they had a run or not, but I suppose they did. I think Merchant's had--much bigger deposits--more run, I suppose,

BM: One of Roosevelt's Vice Presidents was an Iowan by the name Wallace, right?

Grunewald: Yes.

BM: Was he ever around this part of the state, or do you have any memories of him? Henry, I believe?

Grunewald: Well, you never saw too much of him here.

BM: Typical Vice President!

Grunewald: Yes, that's true. Although, personally, I think he was probably one of the most brilliant men we've had in office. He wasn't in this area, it was back home . . .

BM: He's from the western part of the state?

Grunewald: Des Moines, especially, I think. Of course he had the Wallace's Farmer there, and interests in Des Moines.

BM: Was there any impact on Iowa for having a Vice President who happened to be from Iowa or do you think that had any bearing on Iowa voting or not voting for Roosevelt during that particular time?

Grunewald: No, I think the personality of Roosevelt is a little overpowering, I think he more or less overshot everybody else.

BM: He didn't have very good competition during those years either.

Grunewald: No.

BM: Tell me about Iowa City in the days that you were down there as a graduate student. How did you get back and forth?

Grunewald: Most of the time I took the Interurban back and forth. Of course you could ride down there for forty cents, which was pretty reasonable.

BM: Where did you pick it up? Here in Cedar Rapids?

Grunewald: I picked it up down at the Interurban Station. It was down on Fourth Avenue and Second Street.

BM: Which was different from the big railroad station?

Grunewald: Yes, there used to be a building there--in fact they had a restaurant in there. It's under where Killian's ramp is now. It was all torn down, of course. At that time they had a restaurant there and they had--it was a one-story building then. And the Waterloo Interurban also came down.

BM: How long did it take you to get down to Iowa City on the Interurban?

Grunewald: Oh, forty minutes maybe, it wasn't too long. Of course, they stopped to pick up all the milk cans and all the passengers along the way. I suppose we picked up about three or four

passengers each time we went down. And maybe a couple of milk cans along the way, express cans of some kind. But the old wooden coaches were big, lumbering coaches. And they had the stream-lines street coaches later on. They were real nice riding. I enjoyed riding back from the Interurban there.

BM: How long did the Interurban last? When did it go by the way?

Grunewald: It's been fifteen years, maybe it was longer. Time flies so.. And, of course, the same company that ran the Interurban--the Cedar Rapids Interurban--also ran the streetcar, part of the streetcar lines here too. They had the Ridgewood, Linwood, and Avendale streetcar lines.

They had a loop around the downtown area and then back down. The Interurban was nice.

BM: Tell us about family holidays during the twenties and thirties. Like Christmas, Easter. How did you celebrate those? Did you go back to see your grandparents? You had grandparents back in Ohio. Did you go back in the winter or was that a summer type thing?

Grunewald: That was summer time we usually drove down. I think my mother and I took a train down one time. I think it was the time my grandfather passed away. But otherwise we stayed--as a rule if we went anywhere--because my father's brother lived on C Avenue West, A Street and C Avenue. We went over there alot of times, or either they came over. Or went down to my uncle's in Blairstown, who lived there at that time. That's about as much as we did.

BM: Any special family customs that you used to enjoy?

Grunewald: Not really, no.

BM: Where did you get your Christmas tree?

Grunewald: When we bought them, my father usually bought them here in town. We didn't have one too many times. We usually had a small one. It was less than a dollar, probably 75 cents.

BM: Let's go from talking about family holidays to something that was a big event here in town, which was the Starch Works. You told me that you had memories of the Starch Works explosion. What do you remember about that?

Grunewald: It was May 22, 1919.

BM: How old would you have been then? Fifteen?

Grunewald: I was only about twelve years old, just a little bit over twelve. My father was out of town at that time, in fact, he was coming in on the train about the time that the thing happened. He said he could feel the ripples in the track coming into town.

Anyway, we were sitting down to the supper table. Our kitchen was at the back end of the house, and had an open screen door right there. It was a warm evening so we had the door open. I was sitting on that side and my mother was sitting here. All this that happened--I thought it was an earthquake. I didn't think it was an explosion at all. Everything just shook, you know! We didn't know what to think. We knew it must be something outside, you could tell it was outside somewhere.

So we went out the back door. The neighbor next door was coming to our house, she thought something had happened at our house. We got back there--both of us met back there and saw

that huge black column going straight up in the air. "Oh, my God, the Starch Works," she said. So we didn't realize at the time how serious it was and everything. We decided, of course, we quickly went down.

We got down First Street SW and got out Third Avenue by the fruit store. I don't know whether he's still there or not. Anyway there used to be a fruit store on the corner, and he was busy peeling the glass off the oranges.

BM: He was going to save the oranges!

Grunewald: There were very many people, we met people coming down with cuts on their faces, and bandages on their heads, you know. The thing that happened, the wind just blew right in on top of them and there were just hundreds of people cut up with glass. I don't think there was more than half of the windows on the west side of Killian's store. Most of the windows were out on that side.

BM: I was ignorant of this. What caused the explosion?

Grunewald: I don't know if they've definitely figured the exact cause. I think it was caused by the mixture of air and the dry starch, which is very explosive in the first place.

And it was a four-story building, and they called it the "dry starch" building. I suppose, just like a building full of dry starch blowing up. In fact, the people at Coe College said that they estimated that some of the debris went a mile up in the air.

Then coming down, you could see when we got down there, the Riverside Park--that's the park just south of the plant--

was just littered with big pieces of timber--two-by-fours, four-by-fours, just snapped off like toothpicks, you know. There were people busy out there with their wheelbarrows picking up two-by fours.

BM: When did you first realize how serious it was?

Grunewald: By the time we got down that far we could realize it was something pretty serious. We didn't, of course, realize how many people were killed or anything. But then we went down, the further we got down there we could see this thing. Of course it was blazing up. It was a four-story building about a block square and there was just hardly one brick left on top of another. You could see that it had caught fire from that. It was between about 5:30 and 6:00 I think, in that area, during supper hour.

The day shift had just gone home. In fact, as I understand, I think it even knocked some of them down on the sidewalk when they were walking away from the plant. The night shift hadn't completely come on yet. So it wasn't as heavy a concentration of people there as there would have been otherwise.

But when we got down there, you could see the fire was burning. You could tell that something--it was a big thing there. There was a four-story building along the railroad tracks and in back of that was an eight-story building. That caught fire, and that building burned for about two weeks. They just let it burn; there was nothing they could do about it. They had all kinds of tales. I don't know whether it was true or not but there was one man, the engineer, in the boiler room

there, he was working there when the explosion came. The debris just shot--they had these big chimneys, they had two big smoke stacks there and I suppose they must have been about twenty feet in diameter--huge stacks. The debris just shot by on both sides of him. It just dazed him and they got in there and he was all right, but he was completely dazed! (Laughter) But I can understand why!

I think there was around forty or fifty men killed in it--lost in the blaze.

BM: And that was the end of the Starch Works then, right? They never rebuilt it, or there was never any . . . ?

Grunewald: Not as such, no. The Douglas Starch Works never got back in business of its own. The fortune of that--there's just so many queer things. People gave reports of places where it hit the chimney--the force had blown the chimney down, blew the side out of the wall and out of the chimney and blew it into the room.

My uncle lived out there where Universal Engineering is, you know where that is on Eighth Street and C Avenue--I don't know how many families it blew the windows right in on while they were eating supper. That's where, of course, most of them were in a bad position because they were eating at the supper table, and that was right in front of the window for a lot of them.

BM: On the other hand, if it had happened during the shift change...

Grunewald: It saved a lot of lives that way, that's right. But that thing, as I say, it burned for days and days. Well, an eight-

story building, it just kept burning.

BM: Did they try to put the fire out or did they just let it go?

Grunewald: Well, there wasn't too much they could do. Of course, for a while they were afraid, I think, more of explosions. But there wasn't really too much they could do, actually, in the way of just more or less getting the . . .

Then the big store, the other building, I suppose there wasn't too much they could do about that either. So apparently they just let it burn.

But that was quite an experience, though. I thought it seemed more **like** an earthquake. The earth just shook, of course now you can tell why. But it did freak things. I think it broke windows clear out in the country club. People that were out at the edge of town--one fellow said he was carrying a bucket and he could feel the force of the air on the bucket. It was just a concussion there all the way around.

I don't know how many million dollars of damage--property damage-- it caused. Things just lay vacant and idle there for years before they cleaned it up a lot.

Riverside Park, as I say, was littered with these big two-by-fours, four-by-fours snapped off.

BM: That's an interesting thought that you had, too. Everybody talks about the explosion itself, but what about what happened to the community. That employed a lot of people, and suddenly no jobs.

Grunewald: Yes, it did. They were just out their jobs, that's right.

BM: It just went away, and there was never anything else?

Grunewald: No, there was never anything to take its place. For years that just lay there vacant. That was the major disaster in Cedar Rapids, I'd say, as far I can remember.

BM: This is the end of tape one, we'll be doing tape two at a later date.

FOOTNOTES

1. Oberammergau is situated in a wide basin in the Ammer valley in Bavaria. There was a settlement there in Roman times, and the town prospered during the Middle Ages because of its location on a trade route. The Passion Play, based on the medieval mystery play which re-enacts Christ's sufferings, dates from 1634, when the people of Oberammergau vowed to perform the play every ten years if they could only be relieved of the plague. They were, and since that time, the Passion Play has been performed every ten years. In 1930, the Passion Play Theater opened, which incorporates the natural setting as a backdrop and which seats 4800 spectators.

2. The Civilian Conservation Corps was part of President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal," his program of social and economic reform designed to lift the country out of the Depression. The C.C.C assigned public works and environmental projects.

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH William Grunewald

CONDUCTED BY Barbara McCuskey

DATE March 25, 1985

TRANSCRIBER Hazel Storm

Interview With: William Grunewald
Date of Interview: March 25, 1985
Interviewer: Barbara McCuskey
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BMC: Mr. Grunewald, I know that you have an interest in music, and I was wondering if you could tell us how that interest got started. How did you first get started thinking of yourself as a musician?

Grunewald: Well, I suppose I... my father was always very much interested in music. He never played an instrument, but he loved music very much and I think he wanted me to get into music of some kind. So I started taking violin lessons when I was, oh, let's see. I must have been about eight years old, I guess.

BMC: Did you get to pick the instrument, or was it picked for you?

Grunewald: Well, I don't know whether I picked it or not. I was satisfied with it. I think it was probably a mutual pick, I suppose, but I started taking violin lessons from Professor Kitchin there that time he was head of the violin department at Coe College. That was several years before the war, and then during the war, of course, he was gone and Mr. Parmenter took over his teaching while he was gone. Then when he came back, I took again from Professor Kitchin and continued taking from him most of the time. In 1922 when my father and family went to Europe, I took some violin lessons in the summer over there in Munich, Germany, and then in 1925 when we went over the next time, I took again

from a teacher in Munich. And that was more or less the extent of my formal lessons, I would say. Of course, I was playing. I joined the symphony about 1924, I think.

BMC: So you were a pretty young man.

Grunewald: Yes, I was just a... I think I had just started to Coe College at the time that I started with the symphony.

BMC: Let's talk about when you were a child, your memories of starting with the... and music around town and things like that. This is a rudimentary question, but where did you get your violin? Were there music stores? What were the music stores here in town, do you remember?

Grunewald: Yes, there were several. There was the Waite Music Company on Third Street there where Armstrong's is now, and then Hiltbrunner's, of course, was a music store and that was on Second Street between Second and Third Avenues at that time. Then they burned out and I think they moved, well, they were... let's see. I think they were down on Third Avenue for a while. Eventually, then, they were out at the shopping plaza in the later years. But I got my violin, both of them, in fact, were... my father, when he was over in Europe the first time, he bought one over there in Munich, Germany. No, the first time was in Mittenvald. We met the violin maker there in Mittenvald, and he since has passed away. He was a well-known violin maker. He got started making violins when he was just a small... barely a teenager. His father was a violin maker, of course, before him. Of course, _____ is the center

of the violin making industry in Germany there and Austria. And, of course, his father, he wanted to have some wood to make a violin, and his father said, "Oh no, I can't give you the best of good wood. You're not old enough, to me." Not to use his good wood, of course, because good wood was valuable in those days, too. So, unbeknownst to his father, he stole some from his father, without his knowing it, and made a violin on his own. And then when his father saw what a good job he did, then he said, "Go ahead, you can make violins, too." So that was my first violin. And the second time, I got another violin in Munich in 19__--I still have that one--and I got another one in 1925 when I was in Munich. I don't know... it's a... unfamiliar to me, but it was a good violin. So that was where I got my violins. Of course, I kept playing all the time during that time.

BMC: What are your memories of Professor Kitchin as a teacher and as an individual?

Grunewald: Well, he was a very nice person. He was a strict teacher and I think he was a good teacher... a good violin teacher. At least he got me through all the pitfalls of violin study.

BMC: Were there any recitals or programs or things that you used to play the violin...

Grunewald: Later on, of course, when I went to Coe, all of the music students had to take part in recitals once a year, so I played in several recitals that way. Then I played... of course, when I went to college and Coe, then, I started playing in the Coe College orchestra while they had it going

there, which rehearsed on the stage of the chapel at that time. I played in one concert with St. Paul's Church orchestra. And then I had my own Sunday School orchestra at First Lutheran Church for a number of years. I directed that and played in it.

BMC: With the children or adult Sunday School class?

Grunewald: They were adults, mainly, most of them were. I think the youngest was probably seventeen or eighteen, but they were older people. Then, of course, I studied two summers over in Europe and then I continued studying at Coe. But I always enjoyed the violin, studying and playing it.

BMC: What do you remember about musical opportunities around Cedar Rapids? Oh, let's say before the war and during the war, like concerts, perhaps, or things that you might have been interested in, as seeing what kind of opportunities were there in things that came through the town?

Grunewald: I don't think there were as many opportunities at that time as there are now. We didn't have this concert series like they have now. Coe College, I think, at that time still had an annual springtime concert series. They had different artists there. They had... Jim _____ was one of them, I know, and I heard Mischa Elman down at the Majestic Theater one time. But the concerts weren't as common as they are now, naturally.

BMC: What do you remember about radio? Did that have any influence on you?

Grunewald: Well, in some respects, it did. I did play over the radio in Yankton, South Dakota. I took a trip one summer there.

BMC: Your family?

Grunewald: An auto trip. Yes, just my father and mother and I. While we were there... I took my violin... Well, we had some friends that lived in northern Iowa and my father wanted them to... Well, they knew I played and they wanted me to bring my violin along; their girl played piano, so we stopped there. Then we went on up to Yankton, South Dakota. We were just visiting the radio station up there, and they found that I could play the violin. So they asked if I'd play a program with them, so I played, I think, about fifteen minutes, something like that, on the radio station there. Then I played at KWCR, when they had the old KWCR, I played three different programs there.

BMC: Oh, now, KWCR was a radio station here in town?

Grunewald: A radio station in Cedar Rapids, yes. The studio was up in the... well, it was part of the... bank is there at the corner of Second Street and First Avenue. The building has been torn down now. I enjoyed that.

BMC: This was live radio, of course.

Grunewald: Yes, it was. I remember that one time in one of the three concerts that I played, while the concert was on, they had broadcast that the lumberyard was on fire down at the southwest side. I think it was Cedar Rapids Lumberyard on Eighth Avenue and Second Street. So, of course, I was fidgeting

all the time I was playing the violin. I was anxious to get it over so I could go down and see the fire. (Laughter)

BMC: Tell me about the beginnings of the symphony as you remember them.

Grunewald: Well, it started, I think, in about 1923. Possibly a year earlier than that... it had been going about three years when I joined. And the same night that I joined, Frank Wessale, who was president of Waconia Sorghum Company, joined. He and I were both second fiddle and we both were standmates for the summer and for several years. And, of course, the orchestra at that time... well, the arrangement was different, too. Professor Kitchin was directing at that time, and they had the... the first violins were on the left side where they are now, and the second violins were where the cellos are now, to the right of the conductor. And then the basses were on the back of the cellos instead of being on the... well, no, excuse me. The basses were on the back of the first violins at that time instead of on the opposite side where they are now.

BMC: Why the change?

Grunewald: I don't know. The orchestra conductors just apparently wanted a difference in sound from some different places, I guess. But the basses were on the... back on the left side of the orchestra as you face the orchestra, at that time.

BMC: Do you remember who the driving force was behind organizing the symphony?

Grunewald: Yes, there were a couple, I think, actually. Dr. Fay McClelland was a local dentist in town.

BMC: That would be McClelland, the general?

Grunewald: Yes, McClelland. And Dr. Lynn Crawford, he was a surgeon in Cedar Rapids. And Dr. Crawford was a cellist, actually, but they needed an oboe player and they didn't have one, so he went to Chicago and took lessons on the oboe so he could pay the oboe for the orchestra. (Laughter) We had a good orchestra, I think, at that time, and we rehearsed quite a while later at Coe College on the platform--that was the old chapel that used to be there. And when that burned, then we went downtown to the Chamber of Commerce, I think--up on the third floor of the Chamber of Commerce. They had an _____ _____ that they could use. They rehearsed there for a while, and then when the new chapel was built, I think we went back then to the new chapel and rehearsed there. And then we went down... when the coliseum was built, we went down to the coliseum and rehearsed on the stage at the coliseum.

BMC: It must have been cold down there.

Grunewald: Yes, it was. There were a number of times there in the winter when it was a little chilly.

BMC: I should say. That's pretty _____

Grunewald: Of course, they had some heat, but it wasn't as much heat as we could have used.

BMC: Did you have to audition, your first time when you went down?

Grunewald: No, I didn't, of course, being... see, Professor Kitchin was the conductor at that time, so he knew what I could play. Otherwise, I would have had to.

BMC: What do you remember about the first performance that you gave as a member of the symphony?

Grunewald: I can't say exactly that anything stood out especially. It was... I don't remember exactly what pieces we played at that time, either.

BMC: Did Professor Kitchin choose the program?

Grunewald: Yes, he chose the program always.

BMC: And what types of things do you remember being the most popular?

Grunewald: Well, we played symphony. We usually had a symphony at each program. We didn't have quite as difficult music, I think, as they have now at the symphony. I think they are more ambitious now than... because they have more talent to choose from probably today.

BMC: Was it a smaller or larger group then?

Grunewald: It was a pretty good sized group. I would guess we had probably fifty, or close to fifty, in the orchestra at that time. I think now they have... what is it? about eighty is it? I think it's at least eighty. It's a bigger orchestra.

BMC: Tell me about a typical performance night. I mean, was it a dress-up affair for the audience? or when was it? a Saturday evening? or did you do matinees? or all of those kinds of things that are lost to me and I don't know how it was?

Grunewald: Well, they were evening concerts. All the concerts were evenings. I was trying to think whether we wore just dark suits or whether we wore tuxes. I don't think we wore tuxes the first years there. I think we had just dark suits, and the women had dresses that were dressed up... a little longer dresses. But I think it was a few years later when they got into a little more formal... that they are now. They had a pretty good turnout for the concerts there. Of course, the chapel at that time wasn't nearly as... it didn't have as many seats as they have now available. If you filled the chapel up, we probably wouldn't be much more than two-thirds of the auditorium now.

BMC: What do you remember about the chapel fire? To get away from the symphony for a minute. We were talking about the chapel at Coe. What do you remember about the chapel fire?

Grunewald: Well, I'll tell you... the chapel fire? Where was I at the time? I think I was visiting at my cousin's down at Blairstown at that time and I wasn't home. So I didn't get to see the chapel fire, actually. I just saw the ruins after I got back. It really burned the chapel down, I can tell you. There were just the four walls standing, that's all there were.

BMC: It was arson, wasn't it?

Grunewald: They think so. I think there was an art handyman or someone they think started it.

BMC: It changed a lot at the college, because that chapel was so strictly a chapel and not an auditorium. Now the new facility is more of an auditorium than...

Grunewald: More of a concert facility.

BMC: Right. But how did it change... I realize that the symphony had to move, so was the fire a good or a bad thing, do you think, for the symphony?

Grunewald: Well, I don't think you could say it was a good thing, possibly; but it wasn't a bad thing either. I think probably it actually encouraged the use of different facilities and maybe a larger auditorium later on. So it probably actually in the end helped the orchestra more than anything.

BMC: Who are some of the folks that you remember playing with, that stand out in your mind as being talented?

Grunewald: Well, of course, Mrs. Richardson was concert mistress to begin with.

BMC: Do you remember her first name or her husband's first name?

Grunewald: Let me see a minute, do I have that? I can't think what her first name was. Mrs. Taylor was assistant concert mistress, Mrs. James Taylor.

BMC: As concert mistress, what were her duties? What did she do?

Grunewald: Well, more or less to... probably bowing. If there were any special markings or any particular ways to play a piece. There probably wasn't as much then as there is now. I think now the concert mistress, for every concert, marks every piece. For every up and down bow and what not, whatever is to be done. But they are just one of the strong persons

there to lead the orchestra. At that time, I think that was as much as anything. She was very good. And Mrs. Taylor, of course, was good, too. And, of course, Mrs. Taylor's husband played cello. And Mr. Richardson played the flute. He was a very fine flute player. As I said, there was Mr. Frank Wessale from the sorghum mill that came from Minneapolis and joined the same night I did with the orchestra. And he and I were the standmates in the second violins there for a number of years. And Lester Baldwin, he's now deceased, he played second for a while. And Frank Wessale's daughter, Beulah, played cello. And Frank Zbanek played... let's see, he played bass, I think. He was one of the bass players. Then Mr. Hungerford played bass. That was one of the tragic things in the orchestra probably. He suffered a severe hemorrhage on the stage and bled to death right on the stage. Right after a concert.

BMC: Yes, tell us about that. I have heard that story other times, and it was...

Grunewald: Well, we didn't... The people just noticed all of a sudden that they... just after the concert, they noticed him crumpled up down on the... sitting down. I think he was sitting down at that time or kneeling down on the stage there after the concert.

BMC: This is Mr. Hungerford?

Grunewald: Hungerford, yes. His daughter is Marjorie Hungerford. She used to be with _____ for a number of years.

Used to be accompanist for them. They got him over to the middle of the stage there and laid him down. Of course, they called an ambulance. But, of course, by the time the ambulance got there, he had already bled to death. It was just like the stuff came out of his... it was just a complete hemorrhage. That was one of the tragic things--I think the most tragic thing that happened while I was in the orchestra.

BMC: Absolutely. Did you ever have any guest artists that would come, like sometimes they do now? We'll have a guest artist who comes and plays with the symphony. Do you remember anything like that?

Grunewald: Well, yes, we had some guests. In earlier years we didn't have... of course, our funds were limited, naturally, for one thing. In fact, at that time none of the players, of course, were paid, and I think they paid Mr. Kitchin; I think they gave him an honorarium--maybe three hundred dollars or four hundred dollars, something like that. It was a pittance to what he was doing, of course.

BMC: It was about a penny an hour!

Grunewald: It was really a number of years before we actually got to the point there where we could... in fact, I think it was pretty much after Mr. Kitchin's tenure when Mr. Denecke took over that we began to get paid guest artists. Then, of course, after Mr. Denecke, Mr. Williams and so on. But the orchestra was well received there in the chapel, I think. We always had pretty good crowds.

BMC: I think it's a wonderful thing. What about other symphonies around the state? You know Des Moines has had one for a number of years, but I don't know when they got started. Did you ever go over and listen to them?

Grunewald: No, I never heard the Des Moines symphony. And the Waterloo symphony, of course, too... there's Waterloo-Cedar Falls, they call it, I think. They have a pretty good orchestra over there, I think. I have never actually heard them in concert, either. But I think the Des Moines symphony has always had artists. Sometimes I think they have had artists comparable pretty much to ours. Of course, the city's considerably larger; they can support a little larger orchestra, too, of course.

BMC: You were talking earlier about funds and fund raising and how there wasn't a fund as there is now. Do you remember anything about fund raising? what special events or things that they used to have to do to try to keep the symphony on its feet?

Grunewald: I think they sold tickets to the orchestra. They didn't have the fund-raising drives that they have now... have had in recent years. At least during Mr. Kitchin's time and even during Denecke's time so much.

BMC: Was there always an auxiliary organization? support group?

Grunewald: Not always. I think that came, too, in later years. I think probably a little later during Denecke's years was when it was organized, I believe.

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he never really had many disciplinary problems or anything of that kind, of course; but I think he was just a little bit stricter and more roughshod about it than Mr. Kitchin would have been.

BMC: And then after Henry Denecke came...

Grunewald: After Denecke, then Williams came.

BMC: What was Mr. Williams's first name?

Grunewald: Richard.

BMC: Richard Williams. Okay, right. And what kind of a person was he to work with?

Grunewald: Well, he was very nice. Actually, all of the conductors, I think, were very fine people to work with. As long as you did your part, I think they supported you and were good to you.

BMC: How much did the conductor's personality come out in different performances, do you think? the type of performance that gets put before the audience?

Grunewald: I think possibly... I think Williams and Denecke were probably a little more forceful personalities than Professor Kitchin. But Professor Kitchin got the music out of the people, too. I think Denecke and Williams hammered more on the fine points than Professor Kitchin did. Of course, that was their job, actually, too, to see that they got every last bit out of the orchestra.

BMC: You were in the symphony during World War II, and I was going to ask you: What impact did the war have on the symphony?

Grunewald: Actually, it didn't have a great deal, I think, because the majority of the members were either women or older men. In fact, there were very few that left because of the war. I think Burkhalter was an officer, and he was out during the war. But otherwise, I think most of them were either married men or older men that weren't drafted or eligible anyway.

BMC: There were seasons straight through the war, then?

Grunewald: Yes, the orchestra continued right through the war.

BMC: Where was your favorite place to play, of all the places that the orchestra was venued?

Grunewald: Well, I think probably the Paramount Theater would be my favorite place. I think the acoustics were as good as anywhere. Of course, the coliseum was next favorite, I would say. But at the theater there I think you had just a bit more of a friendly surroundings and it wasn't as cold as the coliseum is.

BMC: Also, the Paramount is much more elegant. It makes it seem like more of an occasion, I think.

Grunewald: Yes, it seems like it is more natural to be musical there than at the coliseum. (Laughter)

BMC: You were mentioning that there is someone who later went on to be conductor at the Dallas that used to play with the orchestra. Who was that?

Grunewald: That was Don Johannes.

BMC: What did he play?

Grunewald: He played violin. He played for, I think, most of the season with us, and then he moved to Dallas and later became director of the Dallas orchestra. And then he played, I think, with another orchestra later on in the East, I believe, too.

BMC: Now, did he come... was he here in Cedar Rapids for another reason?

Grunewald: His family lived here in Cedar Rapids. I'm not sure if his folks are still living or not.

BMC: What years would that have been about?

Grunewald: It was probably in the forties or early fifties, I would guess.

BMC: We were speaking earlier about... that World War II did have an impact on the symphony... at least the symphony part of it--not personally, I'm sure. What about the Depression? Was there any doubt that they were going to be able to continue with the money situation and things changing? Do you remember?

Grunewald: Well, they didn't... at that time, of course, I think that was when they went into the Chamber of Commerce building there, on the upper floor of the First Avenue end of the coliseum, and I think they got their quarters there without paying very much for it. Of course, the symphony orchestra... I think we had quite a bit of music on hand by that time. They could get along most of the time. It was... you could feel lean times, of course, but I think it didn't really have that big an effect on the symphony. In

fact, I think sometimes mainly in times of Depression when people are out of work or something, I think maybe the symphony got more support morally with the presence of people there than they might have when things have been more prosperous.

BMC: Do you know how much a ticket cost? Do you remember... did people have memberships? Did they buy for a series? Did they limit individual admission?

Grunewald: I think at that time... I don't think they had the season tickets in the earlier years; I think it was just straight admission, as I recall. Of course, never having had to buy a ticket there, I really never got into that very much--the organization of the symphony--otherwise.

BMC: I would like to talk about just some general things, too. The symphony is fine and I think it is interesting and we are always interested in general memories about the way things were around Cedar Rapids, like talking about communications, for instance. We talked about radio stations and things a little bit. What else do you remember about radio in town? the things that were available and the programs that originated here in Cedar Rapids?

Grunewald: Well, Mr. Paar had a radio station, KWCR, at that time.

BMC: Mr. Power?

Grunewald: Paar. P-a-a-r. In fact, that's the station I played three different programs on, evenings. Of course, there was no TV at that time. I remember the first time I heard when they had the NBC, when they started the network program, I can

remember hearing (special song). I could hear that _____ it was _____ going along the streets, you know, because people had their radios on. It was sort of a strange sound to begin with.

BMC: Do you remember when your family got their first radio?

Grunewald: Oh boy, let's see. Well, we just had... oh, it was quite a long... quite late. We didn't have a radio for a long time. I think I was probably... oh, I was probably in high school at least. In the later years of high school before we got one. I always remember our first time with the TV, of course, when TV first came on. People, it was such a new thing, of course, to see pictures on the screen there that people would just look at anything. Just to have a picture, if it was a man walking down the street, that was fine. It was entertaining no matter what it was. It was really amusing to see that some people just turned it on regardless of what it was. There was a picture there, and that was all that mattered to them. (Laughter)

BMC: Well, your family was always so interested... as a boy, we talked earlier, and your family was interested in music and in some of the cultural aspects. What was the opinion of radio? If you didn't get one until kind of late, maybe their opinion wasn't very high at home.

Grunewald: Well, it wasn't... this is sort of a gray area to me as far as that's concerned. I don't know that they had any too much of an opinion one way or the other on it. They could

take it or leave it, more or less, is what they could do, I guess.

BMC: Were the local radio stations affiliated with the networks as the TV stations are?

Grunewald: No, not at that... no, not earlier. I know KWCR was one station, and WJAM, I think, was the Gazette station. We just had the two radio stations, of course, at that time before TV. They had their programs of various kinds, although I never listened too much to radio at that time. Not as much as we look at TV today, I guess.

BMC: What about... you talked about the Gazette. What about newspapers in town? was there ever any newspaper other than the Gazette? I know it used to be in the morning and the afternoon.

Grunewald: Well, there used to be a Republican... it was called the Republican. Cedar Rapids was Republican, of course, and that was published down there where the art gallery is now on Fourth Avenue and Second. That used to be the newspaper building there--where the newspaper was published. And that went out of business. Speaking of the Republican, let me show you something...

BMC: Oh, my! We have a front page from the Cedar Rapids Republican here in front of me on the table. It says it's the Sunday morning edition, October 3, 1926. On one side above the bar it says, "Edited for the people. Everybody reads it." And on the other side it says, "More reader interest than any other paper in Iowa." Was that true? I

mean, was this a real popular paper? Did it have a wide circulation?

Grunewald: Well, I think it had pretty good circulation there for a while. I don't know just why it died, really, but it was considered a very good paper.

BMC: Did it take a different stance than the Gazette? I mean, do you remember editorial differences or anything like that?

Grunewald: The Gazette, I think, was more conservative than the Republican was. I don't know as far as party-wise is concerned which party actually... They called it, of course, the Cedar Rapids Republican. I suppose it was Republican, apparently, but actually it was... a person sometimes thinks of the Democrats as being more liberal than the Republicans, but actually this is a very liberal paper, I think.

BMC: You think it was the Depression that did the paper in?

Grunewald: I would guess so. You see, this was what? 1926? Yes, it wasn't too many years after that when the paper went under.

BMC: We've talked about newspapers a little, we've talked about radio a little bit, what about, oh, other kinds of activities in the community? What about the amusement parks? Do you ever remember going there as a young man? Like the Alamo was one, I think.

Grunewald: Well, that was... yes, the Alamo, that was a little bit before my time. I was pretty young then; I don't think I ever went to the Alamo. But, of course, Cedar Park out in the other end of town, the one there between Cedar Rapids and Marion, that was a family park there for a number of years.

BMC: What was out there?

Grunewald: Well, they had a ferris wheel and amusement things there. Not like carnival things, but a ferris wheel and merry-go-round and a miniature railroad. You know where the Cedar Park is now, out there just at the edge of Marion and Cedar Rapids. Well, that was actually the only amusement park that we had here in town. But, like I said, the circuses and the carnivals, of course, came down. They used to be where the Linkbelt-Speeder plant is now there between Fourth and Sixth Street. That used to be a big, vacant area and that used to be where the circuses always set up.

BMC: Did Barnum Company come with the big top?

Grunewald: Oh, yes. Barnum & Bailey and Ringling Brothers, _____ Wallace, they all came. And they usually unloaded... all the tracks... and, of course, now the tracks, I think, are all pretty much taken up, but they came back up between Fifth and Eighth Avenues there between Second and Third Street there, they'd back the trains up there and unload it there on their wagons and go on out Eighth Avenue, over the Eighth Avenue bridge to the place there where they set up their tent. But it was a big day. They'd usually have a circus parade in those days. Of course, they'd have the parade, too, about eleven o'clock in the morning. That was a big thing.

BMC: Oh, sure, absolutely! What year did you get married?

Grunewald: I was married in 1942.

BMC: Where did you meet your wife? Was she from Cedar Rapids?

Grunewald: Yes, she was from Cedar Rapids. Well, I was teaching school north of Cedar Rapids, and it was just the end of the year and I had just gotten home with my suitcase. Well, I got home, and this girl came up to... what was she selling? a membership in something or other, and she came up to the porch there. And at that time, of course, I had just gotten home, and I said, "Why don't I come down to your house and see you down there, possibly?" There wasn't any romance in mind at that time, especially, but anyway I went down there and talked to her. And we got together and she played piano some, so she got to playing the piano and I would play the violin with her. We got acquainted and it resulted in getting married. That's how I met my wife.

BMC: Where were you married?

Grunewald: We were married in the Little Brown Church in Nashua.

BMC: Really? That's wonderful. How did you get down there? You guys just drove down and the family went down?

Grunewald: Well, we drove down. Well, my mother. My father was gone by that time. There was just my mother and her mother--her grandmother, I should say. They were the only two others besides us there.

BMC: What made you decide to do that?

Grunewald: Well, I don't know, we just... Well, she belonged to one church and I belonged to another church, so we thought that would be the best way--to get married in another one.

BMC: And the romantic thing, too. That's wonderful. (Laughter) And then you had how many children?

Grunewald: We had two daughters.

BMC: The thing I'm trying to get out is, I know you were involved with the P.T.A. once your daughters were in school, and I wanted to talk to you about that a little bit. When did you decide to get involved with the P.T.A., and what school was it?

Grunewald: It was Jackson Grade School, in the sixth or seventh grade. Let's see, Jackson went up through the seventh grade there. I think both of our girls were in school then. My wife was vice president one year; and then I was president one year, and I was vice president the next year. It happened to be during the time when they had this big doings out at the corn-husking contest here, and President Kennedy was here and Mrs. Eisenhower. So we got a chance to... we were delegated to escort Mrs.... see, she was a graduate of Grant and went through Jackson School, mainly.

BMC: Mamie Eisenhower went through Jackson School, right.

Grunewald: And we were designated, of course, to be hosts for her and so we hosted her all around through the school and showed her around.

BMC: And we have a newspaper clipping here, and it says, September 21, 1958, was when she was here.

Grunewald: Yes, that was when it was.

BMC: What made you decide to get involved with the P.T.A.?

Grunewald: Well, of course, having children in school, we felt it was worthwhile... very worthwhile to have parents. We enjoyed

working with other parents and it was a very worthwhile thing, I thought.

BMC: What kinds of issues did you deal with during the time that you were vice president and president?

Grunewald: Some of them, you might say, were _____, although one of the things that we... of course, at that time we lived on the twelve hundred block of Third Avenue. See, Jackson School was on Twelfth Street and Fourth Avenue. And then, of course, Third Avenue was quite a busy street there, and there was no traffic light there. So we counted traffic. I stood out there and counted the traffic there for a period of time, and then we went down to City Hall to show them the figures on it so we could get a traffic signal there. For the children to cross, we felt it was really a dangerous crossing there. That was one of our projects.

BMC: Did the P.T.A. have anything to do with curriculum decisions or anything like that at that time? I mean, were there ever any issues that...

Grunewald: Not while I was there, we didn't have any, especially.

BMC: What other memories do you have of working with the P.T.A.?

Grunewald: Well, it was... I was getting acquainted with the other parents, I think, and the school itself was one of the things there. And then, of course, while we were there, we had the anniversary of Jackson School. See, Jackson School was built in 1858, and this was the hundredth anniversary, so we lined up... In fact, we were the ones that invited

Mrs. Eisenhower to come there. Of course, Mrs. Eisenhower went to Jackson, you see.

BMC: So a Jackson School had been there since 1858?

Grunewald: Yes, that was the original Jackson School.

BMC: We are almost to the end of this side, and I don't want to run off the tape, so I'm going to end Side One and continue on the second side.

End of Side One, Tape 2

BMC: Mr. Grunewald, we were talking about when Mamie Eisenhower came to the centennial anniversary of Jackson School here in Cedar Rapids. This was in 1958. She was First Lady at that time, because President Eisenhower was in the White House. What do you remember about her visit?

Grunewald: Well, she was a very gracious person. I really liked her. We wrote and invited her to come to the... when we knew that President Eisenhower was coming to the corn-husking contest there north of Marion, we invited her to come to the school and told her, of course, that was the... the school was celebrating their anniversary, too.

BMC: Now, if I can be cynical for a minute, 1958 would have been an off-election year; so President Eisenhower was probably here campaigning for the House of Representatives. That was probably why he came to the corn-husker festival.

Grunewald: Yes, I suppose. Of course, Kennedy was here, too, at that time.

BMC: For the same reason?

Grunewald: Yes.

BMC: Well, when she came, she surely must have come with the Secret Service.

Grunewald: Oh, yes, she did. She had... in fact, the Secret Service was with her all the time. When she came, the Secret Service came into the building and stayed with her there. I think for a short time... actually, I think they didn't go with her every minute of the time. I think part of the time I took her arm and showed her around through the building--where she was, where she had gone to school. I remember we had... of course, we were having this celebration and, you know, they had a cake baked in the shape of Eisenhower School. The Secret Service wanted to tear it apart to see if there was a bomb in it. And my wife, Marva, said, "No, no, you aren't going to do that." (Laughter)

BMC: They wanted to destroy the cake in order to save it. (Laughter)

Grunewald: So, she persuaded them to leave her cake intact. But it was a wonderful event there through the people that came there, not only on that day but especially the weekend there when they had the reunion there. The people that came there from all over. Mr. Armstrong was there. Of course, at that time at Jackson School... you see, that neighborhood in that time when it was first built was the elite neighborhood in Cedar Rapids, so all your better-known families lived in that area. So you had the Armstrongs and the Douglases and practically all the rich... the well-to-do and educated people living in it.

Grunewald: Yes.

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BMC: They were alumni.

Grunewald: But it was... I never saw so many people having a good time and reminiscing as there were then. I don't know how many hundred people we had there that day.

BMC: Can you describe the celebration? I mean, was there a picnic? or a reception? or were there speeches? Do you remember how it was?

Grunewald: As I recall, we just had a get-together. It was more or less like a reception, you might say. They could come to the school and visit the school, and the teachers were there--of course, the present teachers--and talked to them and reminisced. Of course, most of them were people they hadn't seen for years. It was a very enjoyable thing for most of these people that came... that had gone to the school. We had one man there that had been there... well, the school was only about five or six years old when he went to school there. He was about ninety years old, I think. It was really quite an event. (Laughter)

BMC: Do you remember any of the reminiscences, any of the stories that people told about Jackson School?

Grunewald: I was trying to think. There was one... some of the things that they... one thing I was trying to think in my mind there, I can't... that they wanted to do something or take something out, and the parents said, "No dice. They're not going to do that." There was something on the playground, I think, that they wanted to do to help us. It wasn't proper or something, and the neighbors didn't want it. But they...

BMC: You mean playground equipment, or a swing perhaps?

Grunewald: Something of that kind, I think, that they... but the parents prevailed. (Laughter)

BMC: I thought your family home was just across the river from downtown, right?

Grunewald: Yes.

BMC: Could you tell us a little bit about downtown at that time, what it was like as a social center as well as a commerce center?

Grunewald: Well, downtown was, of course... in those days Saturday night was the big night, too. It isn't anymore, but it used to be the big night and people just... the sidewalks would really be crowded downtown. I remember I went down... of course, at that time we lived about six blocks from the river on the west side... and I put my rollerskates on and skated downtown, especially if they wanted something from downtown. I remember some of the busiest places there Saturday night would be the two meat markets--Buehler Brothers Meat Market was on First Street there, next to the corner of First Avenue and First Street. It would be on the east side of the street. I always remember the sawdust on the floor, and if you went in there was a crowd lined up buying meat. Then around the corner on the other side, next to where Hedges is now there used to be another big meat market--Sharpenburgs--and that used to be a crowded meat market, too. Not as crowded as Buehler Brothers, I don't think.

BMC: Tell me what your mother's grocery shopping was like. How did she get the groceries for your family?

Grunewald: Well, my father... I think my father did most of the grocery shopping. He was, of course, more or less footloose. I mean, he was an attorney, and he would go downtown every day. So I think he went shopping most of the time. Of course, we didn't have a car either.

BMC: Oh, that's true. Did your mom provide him with a list, or did he just buy what looked good and then she had to punt?

Grunewald: Well, I think he probably... a little of both, I guess. (Laughter) If he saw something real good or some real good buy, he'd come home with it. Otherwise, if she wanted something special, of course, she'd ask him to get that too.

BMC: Did the butcher deliver, or did they... ?

Grunewald: No, you had to go there to get your meat. That was always a crowded place there, on Saturday nights especially.

BMC: Did your mother ever drive?

Grunewald: No, she never drove. In fact, neither one of them drove. The first car we had was in about 1923, I think, and I learned to drive that. The first time I drove--the first summer I drove--in fact, we drove up to Minnesota, up to... way up to northern Minnesota, and I was really broken in right by the time I got through. In those days, of course, they didn't have a lot of the things that they have now. It was quite different in those days, too--I mean driving cars, they didn't have the high speeds that you have today.

Some of the stores... some of the other stores, going back to the downtown again, some of the big stores, where

the Roosevelt Hotel is now and that area there and the Parkade there used to be the Fair... Franchair Company, the Fair Store, a big department store.

BMC: F-a-i-r?

Grunewald: F-a-i-r Store. And they had a big fire there and they burned. I think after that they never completely recovered from that.

BMC: When was that?

Grunewald: Well, that was in the twenties there, I think. In fact, the Chamber of Commerce burned, too. That's where the Cedar Rapids Symphony lost a lot of their music in that fire, because they had their music stored in one of the rooms there.

BMC: What do you remember about that fire?

Grunewald: Well, I didn't see that particular fire but that apparently was... well, it wasn't as big a fire for one thing, but it did damage there and damaged the inside of the building. But the Fair Store, of course, I remember seeing that fire and that was quite a good sized fire. Across the street from the Franchair Company, on the south side of First Avenue, there was Rep's Department Store, another department store, and Craemer's. Well, they're still there, aren't they? Craemer's was still there at that time. Let's see, there was one other. Well, Neisner's had a twenty-five cent to a dollar store there for a number of years on the corner where _____ First Avenue. There used to be two Liggett's Drug Stores here. One was on the corner of First

Avenue in the Iowa Theater Building, on the corner there; and then another one down on the corner of... where Armstrong's is now. There used to be a Wickstead corner there.

BMC: Did the drug stores have a fountain? Do you remember?

Grunewald: It seems to me they did. I believe they did. I never actually had gotten drawn into any ice cream or anything like that.

BMC: Did your father use to come home for lunch or did he eat downtown? Do you remember?

Grunewald: I think some of both. Most of the time I think he came home for lunch because he was quite a walker, and at that time when he was living there... One time we lived on... we were both close enough to town you could walk downtown and back. Of course, being an attorney there, as his hours were a little bit more flexible, so he... he liked to walk, he was a great walker. Then, of course, when he was conducting European tours, too, he did a lot of walking over there. He took these people on walks before the regular touring part of the course began.

BMC: Did your mom ever have any household help--help around the house at all?

Grunewald: No, she never did.

BMC: That was a lot of work.

Grunewald: Yes, she did; she worked hard. Yet she held... well, her father was a Civil War veteran, and she was president of the G.A.R., leader of the G.A.R. here.

BMC: What is J.A.R.?

Grunewald: Grand Army of the Republic.

BMC: G.A.R., oh of course. Grand Army of the Republic, O.K.

Grunewald: Then she was also president of the... at that time they had what they called West Side Auxiliary for the Children's Home. It was a women's organization to raise funds for the Children's Home. At that time they called it the Home for the Friendless; I don't know why. (Laughter)

BMC: Is this the Children's Home that is over by Coe College?

Grunewald: Yes, that's the one. In fact, this Auxiliary I think greatly furnished one room there. But they had that going for... I'm not sure if the Auxiliary is still going. But she was President of that, I remember, for a long time. Between those two organizations... well, she also belonged to the Royal Neighbors. That was a social lodge at that time.

BMC: They belonged to what?

Grunewald: The Royal Neighbors, have you heard of them?

BMC: Royal Neighbors? No, tell me about them.

Grunewald: Well, it's a social lodge like the Oddfellows and the... Well, the Oddfellows and the Royal Neighbors, I think, were the two principal lodges at that time. They had dances and social hours downtown. I don't know whether either one of them is going now.

BMC: Do you remember your mother and father getting dressed up to go to the Royal Neighbors dances and things?

Grunewald: Well, yes. Although they didn't really dress up, I mean, that much. They put on... probably you didn't notice that they were that much dressed up. They wore what they would be during the week I think. In those days, of course, they didn't have... things weren't too flush there during that period there. As far as buying a lot of extra-fancy clothes, I don't think they did that.

BMC: We talk a lot about the Czech Community here in town. Was there also a German Community?

Grunewald: Not as such, no. The Czech Community was on the southwest side, mostly... well, mostly below 16th Avenue, I would say, on the west side. But... no, he... my father, of course, was German, but I don't know that... he did start a German Club here that ran for quite a while during the Depression called the Frohsinn Society--"Happy Voices," it was called. It was kind of a singing group.

BMC: Wait a second now. Say that word again, Frohsinn?

Grunewald: F-r-o-h-s-i-n-n. Happy voices. They had good times there. They met in one of the halls downtown there; I think about once a month they had meetings. That went on during the Depression for, oh, two or three years.

BMC: And it was a singing group.

Grunewald: It was primarily a singing group but also a social group, too.

BMC: They didn't perform?

Grunewald: No, no.

BMC: They just sang. Wonderful!

Grunewald: My father was one of the founders of the City Market, the Farmers' Market.

BMC: Right, we talked about that. I think that's wonderful, that is such a European view. I never thought of it that way.

Grunewald: Of course, he got that idea from Europe there--the farmers' markets over there.

BMC: As a boy, did you have any opinions on the Czech Community, for instance, or different areas of town? Did you have a bike so that you could get around a lot?

Grunewald: No, I never owned a bike. I had a little farmer's wagon that I pushed around, went around the block with. Probably annoyed the neighbors because it made so much noise it could be heard about a block away. (Laughter)

BMC: Were you aware of the Czech Community? Did you have any friends that were Czech?

Grunewald: Well, not too much of that as a boy at a younger age. I think I got into more of that in later years when I probably realized the number of Czech people there were. Although we had a number of close friends. The Witouseks--we are very close friends of theirs. While we lived on A Avenue, they lived only just about a block and a half from us. The girl played piano... the daughter played piano and I went with her and played violin with her a few times. In our community, our acquaintances were pretty much scattered all over the city, I think you might say.

BMC: Like, let's say when you were in high school, what would a typical Sunday be like? What kinds of activities would you

have been involved in when you were, say, eighteen, nineteen years old? I guess you'd be pretty old for high school; let's say sixteen or seventeen. (Laughter)

Grunewald: Well, we played... I think we got together and played... I didn't play outside too much at that time. I think I didn't rough around as much as some people did. The people that I went with just weren't that kind, I suppose. But we played... if we got together we'd play games of various kinds at home there. But they were really more or less pretty quiet games. We weren't too much in athletics ourselves really.

BMC: Did you play baseball? Were you a baseball fan?

Grunewald: No, not a great deal. I played some softball, but we weren't as strong in athletics probably as the average, I suppose I would say.

BMC: If you had to think of a sports figure in the twenties that you admired when you were a boy, who would it have been? Was there anybody that you admired?

Grunewald: Oh, I suppose maybe Babe Ruth was one we knew quite a bit about. I think of course that sports... I think there is more emphasis on sports today than there used to be at that time.

BMC: I think you're right. It may be because communications are so much more instantaneous.

Grunewald: Well, that's right, yes.

BMC: Being able to watch and listen to baseball games.

Grunewald: Yes, you didn't know what was going on in Cincinnati or Chicago very much in those days.

BMC: What about other national figures that maybe you were aware of when you were a boy--political figures or cultural figures? Was there anybody that you admired particularly as a boy?

Grunewald: No, I don't know that I can think of anyone that particularly stands out among others there. I can't really bring to mind any special figures that stand out.

BMC: O.K., let's talk about... we're just jumping around here a little bit. Let's talk about going to the doctor, going to the dentist, things like that, when you were a young man. Did you ever break any arms, break any legs, have to go to the doctor? Can you tell us about anything like that? Can you tell us about the experience?

Grunewald: Well, not in my boyhood days, early boyhood days. I had more in my later days. I broke my right arm in two places when I was going to college. (Laughter)

BMC: Oh, how did you do that?

Grunewald: Well, I was just running and I tripped over something or other on the sidewalk and fell flat on just the _____ of my arm and broke both bones in it. I had it in a cast there for about six weeks or two months.

BMC: Did you go home and did the doctor come to your house? Did you go to the hospital to get a cast?

Grunewald: I had to go to Mercy Hospital and have it set. And one other time, I guess the other time I broke a bone was when I was ice skating. I did ice skating there in those days quite a bit when I was in high school.

BMC: Where did you used to go to ice skate?

Grunewald: Well, there weren't too many places in that time to skate, really, and what there were weren't very good; but the place I went most of the time was out on... well, it's where Universal Engineering is now. There was a big vacant lot there at that time, it was below normal height--a sunken block there. And the city would flood that; they would flood it about early in the afternoon, about the time that it was just starting to freeze. The kids were coming home from school and while church _____, so you can imagine what kind of a service they would have _____. (Laughter) While I was skating there, I was going backwards skating and hit one of those and fell and broke my head--broke my wrist in three places. (Laughter)

BMC: Who was your family doctor, do you remember?

Grunewald: Dr. Johnston, Florence Johnston, I think. I'm not sure if she's still living or not. She was in practice there for a number of years.

BMC: So you had a female doctor?

Grunewald: Yes. Actually... yes, it was a female doctor, but her father was our family doctor, and then when he died our family adopted her.

BMC: You see, I am interested in this. Was she a rarity as a female doctor? What did you think of her?

Grunewald: I would say probably so. I don't think there were many female doctors in those days as there are now.

BMC: Well, what did you think about that?

Grunewald: Well, I don't know. I didn't think too much about it. We accepted her as... she was a good doctor. I think we were just... I think the fact that her father had been our doctor before I suppose just paved the way for that. It might have been a little harder to accept her otherwise, but there was no problem really in accepting her.

BMC: Do you remember the doctors coming to your house for house calls?

Grunewald: Well, some. When I was in grade school... I think it was grade school, I had... well, they weren't sure whether it was typhoid fever or what it was. I was sick there for awhile and the doctor came to the house that time. Not too many times the doctor... in fact, we were blessed really with pretty good health, I think, otherwise. The thing about being at the house there, one of the things that we did that I think probably... that I think a lot of kids did in those days and that was... we had a big backyard that was about fifty feet wide--it wasn't big, but it was big enough--and we would get boxes and pretend they were buildings and railroads and so on. I remember the Hepker boys and the Rieke boy and _____ next door, there were about three other families that... the kids came over after school and we would play in the backyard. We had boxes that were buildings... you know, we built the Quaker Oats plant back there and had copy cans for tanks and different things. We got a big kick out of pretending we had a railroad and everything else back there.

BMC: Skipping back quite a way, do you have any memories of World War I? Armistice Day, perhaps? Of course, you were pretty young.

Grunewald: No, I was... see, that was in 1914 and I was only seven years old at that time--when it began. I was ten when it ended. I didn't have too much really. It wasn't close enough to me really, and of course, not having any direct relatives or anyone connected with it. Of course, there were friends, but it never had too much of an influence or impact.

BMC: Right. I can understand that because kids are so narrow. What about... we have gotten so blase about things, like you were talking about typhoid fever and diphtheria and things like that. Do you have any recollection of childhood--not yourself, but other childhood diseases, problems like that, epidemics that kids...?

Grunewald: I think we had more of it in those days than we do now. I remember when they had a diphtheria epidemic there and one of my close playmates--it was a girl that had diphtheria--she almost died from it. And then we had another friend, but I remember when we had scarlet fever and typhoid fever. Of course, the ice... in those days they had the ice wagons and kids would come back of the wagon, you know, and they'd be chopping the ice up into 25-pound or 50-pound chunks to take into the house. There were always little chips of ice and we'd all get up there and take some. They had two ice companies: The Hubbard Ice Company and The Chadima Ice

Company. There were two ice companies in town at that time to furnish ice. Of course, we didn't have any refrigeration in those days, and it was quite a thing following the ice wagon so long.

BMC: Did they count your 25 pounds from when it was on the wagon or by the time it got into your house on a hot day?

Grunewald: I think they must have counted it on the wagon. (Laughter) But I remember one close friend of mine... I don't know what she died of; she was just a neighbor girl there that was quite impressive. She impressed me. It wasn't any particular common disease either, but I remember when they had measles they'd quarantine the measles houses and scarlet fever houses and diphtheria houses. There was quite a bit of that around in those days. I don't think they had any vaccines for any of those either in those days.

BMC: See, I remember the polio epidemic in the early fifties and the kind of fear that people had because they didn't know what caused it and it just sort of struck at random. Did you have any feeling from that? Did your mother ever give you any advice on avoiding diphtheria and things like that? What was the feeling about things like that?

Grunewald: No, no she didn't really give us any advice, but...

BMC: Did they used to quarantine individual houses, or would there be neighborhoods where it would...?

Grunewald: Individual houses. They put a placard on there warning of diphtheria or measles, scarlet fever. Those were the

three... I think the only three things that they quarantined for, as I remember in those days.

BMC: When they thought that you had typhoid when you were a boy, what treatment did they give you?

Grunewald: Well, I don't know. They didn't give... I don't know what medicine... of course, I was young enough then I didn't really pay that much attention, but there was some kind of medicine there that they... I just had to stay in bed for some time there.

BMC: Thanks, very good. Well, let me see what else we have here. We were talking about advertising in town.

Grunewald: Well, let's see, between Third and Fourth Avenues there used to be a sign along the railroad tracks. Of course, at that time we had passenger trains going through every few hours there--continental trains--and on this sign they had in big letters: "Cedar Rapids suits me." That was appropo at that time for a lot of people and I think it's still appropo as far as I'm concerned. (Laughter)

BMC: That's great! Well, thank you very much, Mr. Grunewald. I really appreciate your time, and The League appreciates it, too. Thanks for sharing your experiences; we appreciate it.

END OF INTERVIEW