

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CEDAR RAPIDS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH: AL SMULEKOFF

CONDUCTED BY: CAROLYN WELLSO

DATE: JULY 23, 1984

PLACE: CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

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

I. PERSONAL LEAD-IN QUESTIONS

3. --When were you born? Where?
- How long have you lived in Cedar Rapids?
14. --What are your parents' names?
- Where did you go to school?
- Are you married or single?
- Did you raise a family? How big?
- What has been your occupation (career) during your adult years?

II. COMMUNITY TOPICS

A. Technology in the Community

1. Transportation

- 1,2. --Railway travel (Union Station, trips to Iowa City on Crandic)
- Trolleys (the Interurban)
- Horses and First Automobiles
- Mud roads and the seedling mile
- Hunter Airport and the first planes
- Cedar River (ferries, floods, dams)

2. Communications

- Newspapers
- Radios
- Advertising
- Telephones

B. People in the Community

1. Amusements/Recreation

- Motion Pictures
- 13. --Cedar Rapids Parks
- Dances
- Carnival Week
- Chautauqua
- Community Theater
- Little Gallery
- Symphony Orchestra
- Circus
- Greene's Opera House
- Amusement Parks (Alamo)
- Camps
- Community Centers (YWCA, YMCA)

2. Famous Characters

- Cherry Sisters
- 13. --Grant Wood
- Carl Van Vechten (The Tattooed Countess)
- Marvin Cone

3. Lifestyle

- Life before air conditioning
- Winter Activities
- Holidays (Memorial Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, Christmas)
- Clothing
- Toys
- Saloons/Taverns
- Farm Life

4. Family Life

- Household Help
- Women's Roles
- Childrens' Activities/Behavior
- Sunday activities (Church life, Sunday Blue Laws)

5. Ethnic/Minority Life

- 14,15. --Immigrants (Czech, Greek, German, etc.)
- Indians
- Segregation of Blacks
- Jobs Available

C. Organizations and Institutions in the Community

1. Education

- Cedar Rapids Schools
- Coe College
- Mount Mercy College
- Cornell College

2. Government

- City Services
- Streets/Roads

- 4,6. --Relationship with Marion (Courthouse Dispute)

3. Medical

- Hospitals
- Patient-Doctor Relationship
- Broken Bones
- Polio, TB, Debilitating Diseases
- House Calls
- Home Delivery of Babies

4. Business and Economy

- Local Factories (Douglas Starch Works, Quaker Oats, etc.)
- Local Brewing Companies
- 7,8,15. --Retail Businesses /Department Stores Three Smulekoffs
- Professions
- 4. --Banking and Finance
- Restaurants (Greek Restaurants in 30's)
- Businesses that no longer exist (old groceries, drygoods, icehouses)
- Farmers Market
- Mills on Cedar River
- 5,6. --Buildings Erected
- Manual Labor/Types of Jobs
- 10. --Companies (Labor Unions, Strikes, Pay)

5. Attitudes/Values

- Children/Discipline
- Sex/Petting
- 10. --Charity
- Divorce
- Work
- Working women, Voting Rights for Women
- Patriotism (World War I)

D. Historic Events in and Outside the Community

1. Catastrophic Events

- Clifton Hotel Fire (1903)
- Douglas Starch Works Explosion(1919)
- Bank Closings (1933)
- Lyman-Stark Building Collapse(1913)
- Public Library Murder(1921)

2. National Historic Events

- Womens' Suffrage
- 8. --World War I
- Roaring 20's
- Prohibition
- 7. --Great Depression

Abraham L. Smulekoff was born in Cedar Rapids in 1900, the son of Henry Smulekoff and Emma Smulekoff. His father was a Jewish Russian immigrant who came to the U. S. in 1881, settled in Cedar Rapids in 1888, and founded Smulekoff's Furniture Store in 1894. Al Smulekoff has lived in Cedar Rapids all his life, except for the early twenties when he attended college in Philadelphia, PA. Mr. Smulekoff gives a detailed account of what he knows about the beginning of Smulekoff's Furniture Store, the immediate and long term effects of the Depression and World War II on the store, and its growth over the years.

Junior League of Cedar Rapids Oral History Project
Interview with Al Smulekoff
Date of Interview: July 23, 1984
Interviewer: Carolyn Wellso
Transcriber: Marilyn Brubaker
Begin Tape 1, Side 1

AL: We started talking about early items that I can remember of the city of Cedar Rapids, and that would include what my father did and told us. As a young man he came to Cedar Rapids because it was the end of the railroad, unable to speak English fluently but able to be understood. He had a background of a Slavic language, Russian. Then finding in this community (late 1880's, early 1890's) that so many Czech people living in the neighborhood towards Walford all the way from Cedar Rapids all the way to Belle Plain. It was his way of making a living by carrying a pack on his back the first two years. This included household items that farm wives weren't able to come to the city to buy, therefore, he brought the pack to them.

Being young enough he was accepted by the children of the families and became very friendly with them. Even to this day we have people who come in and say, 'My grandfather has a watch that he bought from your father in the early 90's. He tells us stories of how he and your father slept in the haymound together because there wasn't room in the house for him as an outsider and, therefore, he as well as other children did the same thing.' He became a very good friend of many of the old time farm families in the area between here and Belle Plaine. The reason for Belle Plaine is that the railroad was being built from Cedar Rapids to

Belle Plaine, and there were a number of people working on the railroad. That developed a certain amount of business for him. My earliest recollection of what my father told me is one day in about 1895. The railroad was already going to Belle Plaine at that point. He had left his pack there at one of his friends near Belle Plaine and he came home for the weekend. On his way to the railroad station (he lived on the west side and was coming over the old Third Avenue bridge) it started to rain. He stopped into a store that had used furniture and, having had some background in that, before the rain was over and before he left, he had bought the store and that was the beginning of the Smulekoff Furniture Store. From there on, it grew.

In 1900, he built the building on an island. It was one of the largest furniture stores, at the time, in the state of Iowa, and one of the largest furniture stores west of the Mississippi, all the way to the Nebraska border. He was completely satisfied with his own ability to have a successful operation. He knew at the time that there was a new heating stove being developed by a firm in Chicago. Having been in so many of the farm homes, he realized how fine it would be to have a stove like that in those homes. His idea was correct and he was right and very successful from the beginning. With all his own ideas, he satisfied the needs and the wants of the farm people that were living around the community at the time. That same philosophy prevailed for the local people. He became quite successful from day one. He had analyzed the propositions and the problems and found a solution in his own mind and was able to fulfill the needs of so many people. In those days, people traveled by horse and wagon and to travel from Fairfax to Cedar Rapids was an

all-day proposition. It wasn't very often that people from Fairfax came to the town after he had called on them at their farms and homes. When they did come, he found that they came to visit with him, and if there was something they needed, they certainly bought it from him. That was actually the way the store became as successful as it was, under his tutelage and under his ownership and management.

I was born in 1900, here in Cedar Rapids. My earliest recollection besides going to school was having the days after school--being able to come to the furniture store, which at that time was very large to me. It was very impressive to me. My school friends were very anxious to be able to come and play around in the furniture store also. That didn't last very long because Henry, my father, was not a play-around person, and while he enjoyed having a good time, he didn't enjoy having a good time while he was supposed to be working. He felt the same about all those associated with him and especially his children. We all had certain responsibilities and certain jobs to do, so you can say that I began to learn the furniture business from the ground up, which is absolutely true. I learned it by starting to dust furniture, baby carriages, and even wiping off coal stoves. I knew a lot about what was good and bad. I learned the difference between good merchandise and imitation good merchandise. It was very apparent, even as a youngster.

Our store at this particular time was located on what was known as the May's Island. Having built the largest building on the island, he had to practically buy all the rest of the real estate. A traumatic experience I can remember for our whole family was that my

father was about to sell the island to the city as the City Hall. There were two factions, there was the west Cedar Rapids and east Cedar Rapids. There were powers that wanted the City Hall on one side of the river and others that wanted it on the other side. It became quite evident that putting it on the island would be half way between each. There we were and our father and his situation where he was doing very well in the business and having to decide whether or not he should give it up and move elsewhere. In the end, he decided that he would be willing to sell it to the city and even though I am the one that's saying it, he practically gave it to the city much less expensive than it was to build a similar building on our other location, which is one on the west side. Now that the property is sold and the old furniture store is going to become the City Hall, it became necessary for us to decide where he was going to move, whether he should move to the west side or to the east side in the business district downtown, what's now the downtown district. At that particular time, the People's Bank was on the west side and the president of that bank, John Burianek, was a very good and close friend of my father's and had influence with him and convinced him that it would be to his advantage to build on the west side and that advice he followed. We reproduced practically the same building on the west side, the size and all, as what we had had on the island. We're now talking about the period close to 1912 to 1913. There had been quite a growth in the industry in Cedar Rapids at that particular time, the T.M. Sinclair packing plant, which is now Wilson Company, Quaker Oats which was expanding, and the beginning of Penick & Ford. Also, at that particular time the beginnings of the heavy industry, Carmody Foundry, which was later turned into Iowa Steel & Iron and the Iowa Manufacturing Co. which became

very large and important industry for the community. The foundations were being laid at that particular time so that the city of Cedar Rapids had a bright business future.

I find myself now getting away going to school and having the opportunity I'm skipping the years from 1912 to 1914 to about 1920 when I became a lot more concerned about what I myself was going to do. In my own mind I had no idea of doing anything but coming back to Cedar Rapids. I had been imbued with the spirit that my father actually went back into business so that in 1908 or 1910 he could have done what so many other people were, going out to California to retire and he decided to stay in Cedar Rapids so that when I and when my brother were through with school we would have a place to come and a business to step into. That's exactly what happened. I was graduated from school in 1922 and immediately came back to Cedar Rapids even though there were plenty of opportunities to stay in Philadelphia where I was in school and associate with some of my school chums who were going into business in New York, but I still decided that I was a middle-westerner and decided that I wanted to come back to Cedar Rapids and that's what I did.

In the early 20's by the time I came home from school, I found a tremendous amount of activity in the city of Cedar Rapids going on. There was talk at the time of changing the school system from grade school to high school by using the intermediary area of junior high school. While there was considerable discussion in the community it was decided to build junior high schools. At the same time, there was a need for a new modern hotel in the downtown area. There was the movement on foot at the same time to change from our old furniture store City Hall to a new City Hall which we

now have. There was a big argument, also, about whether or not the jail and courthouse should be moved from Marion or somewhere else. Again, the power structure decided it would be better for the community to put it more into the center of the population, which would be the island. That's why the island was much smaller in the early 20's than it is now--where the City Hall is, between Second and First Avenues, was all filled in. It's quite apparent now even with the new jail house, you can see the island is being filled still further past Fourth Avenue towards what would be Fifth Avenue, if it was extended across the river. All those things were going on in the early 20's and required the cooperation of all the power structure of the community. I'm pleased to say that I was one of those involved. It was really, in my opinion, the golden age of the city of Cedar Rapids. It was when the direction in which Cedar Rapids was going was set at that time. We had good builders. Many of the buildings are still as good now as they were at the time. The design was good and they were very well financed. Those of us that had any choice, we tried to make it what we believed a depression-proof city. In other words, enough food packing and food processing, enough light industry and enough heavy industry together with consumption of farm products; for example, the milling of oats and corn by the Quaker Oats and National Oats, the packing of hogs and cattle by T.M. Sinclair Company made a tremendous market for local farmers.

You still have to remember at that particular time, communication wasn't as easy as it is now. Transportation wasn't as easy. Iowa roads were not good yet. There was a movement on foot to start building concrete roads. The community itself was designed to be what some of us thought depression-proof. I believe, to a great extent, for a long

time that was absolutely true. In 1932 and 1933, when we all suffered from a horrible depression, very, very few buildings were foreclosed. No other city in Iowa had as many projects maintained and kept going during the depression as Cedar Rapids. We had very, very few foreclosures. Des Moines had many, many more and Sioux City and all of our sister cities in the state of Iowa had much more than we did. That was mainly because they were based solidly in the first place. The community was a very active, aggressive community.

During the 30's, the community was much better off than most of the others. The Smulekoff Furniture Company was especially better off. We kept building the base of our customers and, by this time, extending out into the community for a further and larger trade area with the better roads and with the better transportation equipment--better trucks. We were able to deliver and give good service which was a part of our creed, on a much larger scale than we had ever done before.

We began thinking about increasing the size and location of our store. We found that, while the west side supported us greatly, we had more customers from the east side. We also found that the center of the trade territory was moving further east and, therefore, we began looking to making a change in location. After a lot of expensive market searches, we decided that, for our purpose, what our building now was at that particular time was Churchill Drug Company. They had just built a new building at the railroad tracks at Ninth Avenue and Second Street East and this building was empty. We made arrangements with the owners to remodel the building for our purposes. This whole project was completed on paper in November of 1941. The remodeling immediately began when we all were surprised at what

happened on December 7, 1941, with the prospect of not being able to have a nail or glass pane, or anything into what we considered our new, beautiful store. We had, as always, an excellent contractor and excellent architects who had anticipated a lot of shortages and had practically everything that was needed in the strategic materials on the job. Therefore, we were able to complete the elevators, all of the steel work that had to be done in the store, and the front and sign which were a distinctive part of our construction.

It was all completed on March 16, 1942. We had our grand opening here. We had, at that particular time, our surveys had shown that it was time to trade up. It was time to widen our base of customers. Not only were we the medium price, but that we should also make an attempt to sell much higher priced and differently designed and highly specialized merchandise. We became, at that particular point, a store for all people. No matter how fine of merchandise you wanted, we had it available on display. We had anticipated this far enough in advance that we had placed orders for such lines as Henredon, Baker and some of the fine lines. We got delivery before the war restrictions made it impossible to build furniture, especially upholstered furniture, bedding, and things of that kind where steel springs were used in any way.

During the war effort, there was no way there was any use of steel coil springs in furniture. Also, appliances were let out only under OPA and under restrictions of helping the war effort was the only way a person could get a refrigerator, and the only way we could buy one and get it from a manufacturer was for us to provide the manufacturer the ultimate use of the person or persons who were going to

ultimately use the product. It had to be approved by one of the government agencies before we could get any delivery. It was not an easy task to find enough merchandise to fill and keep filled this large store. It was about four times as big as the one we moved out of. One way or another, we were able to get and satisfy most of the demand that we had.

You can imagine that during the war years, with the restriction of practically everything that a person needed, especially in the furniture industry or in your home, there was a tremendous build up of desire and need. In order to keep prices in line, there was a restriction placed on credit. We could no longer give extended credit terms. It was necessary, practically, for a person to buy anything and have it paid within 30 and 90 days. Under certain circumstances, we could extend credit for as far as a year. That was the longest that we could go. At the same time, an OPA price ceiling was put on everything to stop profiteering. These were all necessary restrictions, and they were excellent for protection of the people and to keep some that might from gouging the public when merchandise was available. Therefore, there was a tremendous demand and build up.

At the same time, a lot of new items were being added to the ordinary person's life, such as radio (excellent radio), television, and musical instruments and what we call home entertainment items. Therefore, when the war was over, in the late middle 40's, this tremendous need and the fact that people were buying a lot of war bonds and had a lot of savings and the veterans were coming home with substantial bonuses, there was a tremendous amount of built-up demand for all consumer products, including those that we specialized in.

Therefore, our business was booming for a number of years. It was an expansion of what we had always felt was needed in the community. We followed our instincts, which were always to find what the people need or want and then satisfy that need or want. Wherever we could, that's what we did. We were quite successful in what we were trying to do.

In the meantime, the industries of the community--there was not only a built-up demand for consumer goods, but because of that there was a built-up demand for production consumer goods. That made all our factories in Cedar Rapids start to expand. There was the need. Of course, the war had shown that our products of Iowa Manufacturing and others, nation wide and, in fact, world wide. New roads had to be built in the state and all the fifty states, so that our road machinery and all of our industries were expanding to take care of the additional volume. It made Cedar Rapids so much more desirable as a commercial area. That's one of the reasons that Cedar Rapids was envied by practically every other city in the state and very few cities in the United States of our size had the growth and potential possibility of making a profit, which basically is the reason all of us are doing what we're doing.

I'm trying to recall my experience in the late 50's and 60's. It seems to me our industry just kept growing during those years but had slowed up considerably from the 40's and middle 50's. At that particular time, we became a lot more interested in community affairs. For the first time in a long time, the Good Neighbors began meeting their budgets and their drives for funds were going over the top. We were educating ourselves that we're not alone in the world, that we do have some responsibilities to the rest of our citizens and the rest

of the state. That was the era of when so many new churches were built, new schools were changed and added to. In other words, the thinking of the leadership of the community at that particular time was to make it a better community in which to live...the parks--encouraging the city to invest more money in parks, to extend the sewers and the mains in the streets that there could be development in suburbs.

The feeling then was what we can do for one another instead of spending all our time in our own problems or our own efforts. We can do for one another instead of spending all our time in our own problems or our own efforts. There is no question but what part of it was the underlying guilt feeling I think everyone had for this situation in Vietnam. The young people were having and creating a lot of fuss. While we weren't very happy with them, we realize that they did have something to say and they were telling us something that had to be taken into consideration.

During the early 70's and the middle 70's, it became apparent that if we were going to have new industries in this community, we were going to have to do the same thing for industry that we have to do for all other customers. We're going to have to give them what they want. We find that industry itself now chooses the location, not only for source of employment and source of employees, but also their need for entertainment, their need for city parks, their need for school systems. The employers are much more interested in the advantages that their employees can have in a community. Therefore, in the retail business or any business as far as that's concerned, but especially the retail business, the better the city can be for all of

its people and more attractive to bring more people in, the better our retail business is. That's one of the reasons that so many retail stores wanted to come to Cedar Rapids. That's one of the reasons that we have two very large regional shopping centers; not that we need them, but we have them. The reason that they want to come is because this is a good community. Part of the reason it's a good community is because during the 70's and 80's, when there was such a turmoil and when business cycles started going down, that those of us that had something to do with the community saw to it that wherever we could, we had better parks, better use of parks. Whatever had to be done for community welfare, the more we could do for it--the better we all are. That's what actually makes this a real good community and, in my opinion, is the reason that sooner or later, we're going to get out of the doldrums that we are in now.

As I told you earlier, we felt that Cedar Rapids was a depression-proof town. We found that it's not. Our industries, some of them have obsolete factories and it's going to be very difficult to get new factories built in their place, but it will be done. I have every confidence that there is still enough enthusiasm and it keeps growing. There are more young leaders in the community and they, too, realize that they have a big stake in what the quality of life is in the community is--not their own personal, but what the quality of an average person--the person that wants to have it and doesn't have all the funds necessary to join a club or have private entertainment of one kind or another. We do need to keep our balance of good, solid educational opportunities, keep our parks in excellent shape and keep them growing. We all benefit from that and what it takes is more people to be more interested in those things in the community. I'm confident that that will happen.

I've been asked about my experience with Grant Wood. One of my first experiences with Grant Wood was that we owned several pieces of property along the river bank on the west side and one or two along the river bank on the east side. Grant Wood called me one day and said, "Clean up those properties that you have on the river bank and if you do, maybe some of the others will do it. We need someone to start." If any of you remember what they looked like--there were billboards on roofs; of course, there were all kinds of things dumped in the river from buildings along the river, people living along there. We got to a point where we began at that particular time to start deciding that that should be done. He was the motivating factor in cleaning up the river bank. I became interested, too, and at the same particular time there was a Riverfront Improvement Commission that was having a law suit with all the property owners to decide where the river property line really was...on both sides of the river and from First Avenue to Eighth Avenue there was definitely no actual line. A person owning property along the river didn't know how far his land went and he tried to take as much as he possibly could. The Riverfront Commission and those of us who wanted to clean it up got together and made (well, I don't want to take any credit for it at all--I do feel that several of us got the Riverfront Commission and the city together.) There was a definite line established and the decision to build river walls was made, which cleaned up basically the problem to a great extent, until, of course, on the west side and on the east side, except for one or two blocks, the urban renewal really finished it up beautifully. I'm sure if Grant Wood was alive today, he would feel very pleased to see how beautiful our river banks are in Cedar Rapids.

CW Al has asked me to add some background information on his father that was from a Gazette article, December 7, 1975. He felt it would be a duplication to cover this material that has already been printed. For the record, I will read some of this into this tape. Henry Smulekoff was the father of Al Smulekoff and Leo Smulekoff, both candidates for this interview project by the Junior League. He came to the United States as a young man of 21 in 1887. Smulekoff's father had been a leader in Odessa, and had been the head of the Kibbutz and the family had seen good days under the reign of Czar Alexander II of Russia, but in 1881, Czar Alexander III took the emperor's chair and replaced the toleration that had been expressed toward the Jews of Russia with apathy and pogroms. By the middle 1880's, the spirit of most Jews in Russia was being trampled by persecution and poverty. They suffered extensively from the change in the political situation in Russia. So Henry Smulekoff decided to leave as a young man of 21 and headed for America in 1881. His escape from Russia over 700 miles of land to the Australian border has been recorded in an interview by McKinley Canter, who was writing in the Cedar Rapids Republican in 1927. As yet we don't have a copy of that interview, but hope that this can be added to the Smulekoff's records.

Canter's account describes how Smulekoff, aided by two guides, was in sight of the Austrian border on a cold, rainy night and the smell of freedom nearby anesthetized his senses to the dangers of an approaching Russian calvaryman. Smulekoff told how sparks from the patrolling soldier's pipe, reignited caution in the nick of time. He passed in a forest wind, and a whiff of tobacco--one quick leap and the men were across the road, safe in Austria, Canter wrote.

Dates of Smulekoff's arrival in New York and Cedar Rapids and in starting the furniture business conflict. According to McKinley Canter's story, he arrived in New York in early 1888 and in Cedar Rapids in autumn of the same year. I think that Mr. Smulekoff mentioned before the interview started, I think it was a matter of about 16 years. Both the Canter article and the one that the evening Gazette, list 1894 as the year that Smulekoff began his furniture store on May's Island, on the north side of Third Avenue. Other accounts give 1888 as the date for starting. I think that probably this needs to be checked further.

Smulekoff had come to Cedar Rapids after hearing stories about the city. His dreams had been fostered by rumors that Iowa land was selling for one and two dollars an acre and he had hoped to begin a colony of Russian Jewish immigrants. In reality, when he came to Iowa, land was selling for \$35 an acre. Smulekoff's daughter, Ruth Miller, who is now deceased, was interviewed and she said that he came to Cedar Rapids with a group of European and Russian Jews. They were not the first Jews here, but as yet there isn't an exact verification on who was. They thought that Oscar Soloman was the first Jewish businessman in the community and that he had opened a clothing store on First Avenue and Second Street. He is thought to be in Cedar Rapids by 1886, which is about a year before Smulekoff left Russia.

Some Russian Jews in the city were living in what has been described as the ghetto area, but was an area on the west end of Sixteenth Avenue. It would be now near the Czech community. At that time, it was a community composed mostly of Lebanese and Italians. Now Smulekoff, at first, could not afford to buy any

land, so he set out to fix furniture when he first arrived in Cedar Rapids, but what needed fixing, there wasn't too much and he didn't put much cash in his pocket. He then tried building fences for the railroad, and I think Mr. Smulekoff mentioned the railroad in his tape on an area when he went into business also. He tried building fences, but the urge to be in business for himself ended that. With his meager railroad job savings, he went to Solomon's store and purchased dry goods and jewelry and set out on a peddling career. By 1894, he was able to purchase a house, 608 Third Street South and had saved another \$1,250 from his peddling to purchase the future business on May's Island. Mr. Smulekoff has covered the period on May's Island and the move to the present store, which is the site of the new addition of the People's Bank. It was immediately to the west of the People's Bank, where their new addition is now. This store was moved to in 1910.

The senior Mr. Smulekoff died in 1932 and as Al Smulekoff has said, the store was moved to its present location in 1941, just weeks before the breakout of the Second World War. Al Smulekoff, who I interviewed, also said that his father worked in a greenhouse in New Jersey before heading west. He said he took the train to where it ended, which was in Marion. One of the things that Mr. Smulekoff talked about when we were discussing things informally was the absolute commitment, gratitude, the realization of the opportunities that his father and many other first generation Americans had about the opportunities that they could have in this country. He said that his father had come here in 1885.

By 1909, he had a very successful store--one of the largest furniture stores in this part of the country, a Cadillac, and the realization of what opportunities there were for people in this wonderful new land. Henry Smulekoff, like many in the Greek communities, were very supportive of the United States efforts in the First World War...one of the stories being that a hundred Greek boys signed up for the draft and certainly Mr. Smulekoff felt that Cedar Rapids and Iowa had contributed much to him. As his son has said, he wanted his family to remain here to be able to give something back to this community he believed in so very much.

The Gazette article of December 7, 1975, could be referred to if anyone is wanting to do any more research on the Jewish community. It continues with other information that the Smulekoffs are mentioned in and some of their part in the forming of the first synagogue in Cedar Rapids. They supported it all the way through, though Mr. Smulekoff did not refer to this and was not asked about it. He would certainly be a person to interview for anyone interested in anything more about the Jewish community as well as just a wealth of other topics.

