

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH HARRY J. ROCKAFELLER

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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FANTASTIC TRANSCRIPTS

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with General Harry J. Rockafeller on January 17, 2014, in Manalapan, New Jersey, with Shaun Illingworth. Is this Manalapan?

Harry J. Rockafeller: Manasquan.

SI: Manasquan, I am sorry.

HR: M-A-N-A-S-Q-U-A-N.

SI: For some reason, my GPS said Manalapan.

HR: That's the mailing address. The location address is Wall Township, but mailing comes to 2619 River Road out here, okay.

SI: Thank you very much for having me here today. Thank you also for lunch earlier.

HR: Okay.

SI: To begin, could you tell me where and when you were born?

HR: I was born in Asbury Park. [laughter] I was born in Asbury Park, New Jersey, 600 Fourth Avenue, and my date was 23 December, 1916, okay. My father had already--he was about to die. In the Influenza of 1918, he died, okay, but I was born in Asbury Park, New Jersey, 600 Fourth Avenue, and the date was 23 December, 1916. Okay, what else? [Editor's Note: Between twenty and forty million people perished in the influenza (also known as "Spanish Flu") pandemic that swept the globe from 1918 to 1919, following the end of World War I, including an estimated 675,000 in the United States.]

SI: What were your parents' names?

HR: My mother's name was Mary (Solon?). My father's name was John Francis Rockafeller.

SI: Do you know anything about your father's family history, anything about that side of the family?

HR: Well, he moved up to Syracuse and I believe that he got a job up there as steward of the Onondaga Hotel in Syracuse. I don't know whether that was where he died or not, to be perfectly honest. I was that big; I was less than a year old when he passed away, okay.

SI: What about your mother's side of the family?

HR: Mary (Solon?)? They were all Trenton habitants.

SI: Do you know how long the family had been in the Trenton area?

HR: No, I don't, but that's one of the flaky parts here.

[TAPE PAUSED]

HR: Sure.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your grandmother and the role she played in your life when you were growing up.

HR: She took me into her home, which was occupied by her one son, Dr. Eugene Rockefeller, who had been a Rutgers student for his freshman year, and then, went down to the University of Pennsylvania for the completion of his dental degree, okay.

SI: She was also the mother of your uncle, Harry J. Rockefeller.

HR: Yes, and she was the mother of my father, who died, and my Uncle Thomas, who died in the polio epidemic. Both of them were great athletes. Both my uncles, Uncle Gene and Uncle Harry, were athletes, four-letter athletes. You know what that means, Shaun?

SI: Yes.

HR: In the four years of attendance, they got [letters in] four different sports. So, both of them were four-letter men in Asbury Park High School, the first ones in Asbury Park High School. Then, when they went to Rutgers, they both played freshman football. Then, my Uncle Gene wanted to be a dentist, so, he went off to University of Pennsylvania and Uncle Harry came to Rutgers. They played together at Rutgers in football, and then, their sophomore year, they split up. My Uncle Gene had gone on to Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania, where he was All-East.

SI: Wow.

HR: Yes, so, he was pretty good. What else can I tell you, Shaun?

SI: You grew up in Asbury Park. Was that where your grandmother lived?

HR: Yes.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your neighborhood and what it was like at the time you were living there.

HR: It was beautiful, absolutely beautiful, with gravel streets, a beautiful house and nice people, school right around the corner, grammar school, and Holy Spirit Church right around the corner. My grandmother, every morning, seven o'clock, church; I didn't get into that habit, [laughter] but I went the normal Catholic school, grammar school, normal routine there, to finish out my grammar school education.

SI: What was the name of the grammar school?

HR: Holy Spirit, still there, yes.

SI: It was the same name as the church.

HR: Yes.

SI: Were you taught by clergy or lay teachers?

HR: Mostly lay--well, no, I would change that to a mix, mixed, because there were plenty of sisters around. Are you Catholic?

SI: Yes.

HR: Yes, well, you know what sisters are. [Editor's Note: General Rockafeller mimics getting slapped on the wrist with a ruler.] Have you ever encountered those? [laughter]

SI: Not personally. They had stopped that by the time I was in school, but I have heard plenty of stories about the discipline.

HR: It wasn't bad, bit like the butt of a horsewhip, and it was bad when they got you in the closet and stuff like that. They were fierce. I went to St. Rose down there for the first year in high school, right. One year of high school, I played down there. Now, my brother wanted to get into the Naval Academy and he failed the entrance examination. This made my grandmother very angry, because my brother had been a prize student over at the Catholic grammar school, prize student, right. So, she said, "Harry, I'm lifting you out of St. Rose and I'm sending you to Asbury Park High School and you get to work over there." [laughter] So, that was how I got up into Asbury. When she saw the poor results that my brother had, right, she thought, "Damn, that Catholic education wasn't all that good," and she was a dyed-in-the-wool [Catholic]. In fact, a member of the clergy in Holy Spirit Church then told me that my grandmother was a saint, but she said to my brother, "You are out of that St. Rose and, Harry, you're into Asbury Park High School," yes. The very simple reason was, she suspected that the St. Rose education wasn't good, because he was a star at St. Rose in education, right, teacher's pet, that kind of thing. She couldn't understand how he did so badly on the entrance exam to Annapolis.

SI: How many years older than you was your brother?

HR: Two.

SI: Was it just you and your brother?

HR: Yes.

SI: What was his name?

HR: John, same as his father, John, John F. Rockafeller.

SI: Through interviewing a number of Catholics who grew up in New Jersey in the same era, I have heard that there was a lot of prejudice against Catholics in some areas, like Klan activity, that sort of thing. Do you have any memories of that or were you ever told any stories about that?

HR: No, never, never.

SI: Around the same time you lived with your grandmother, the Great Depression began. Can you tell me a little bit about the Depression's impact on your area and on your family?

HR: It was bad, it was bad. I'll tell you about my uncle accepting things in barter instead of getting paid cash or check or getting paid money. For example, he met a guy who made flagpoles, right, and he made a deal with the guy, "I'll fix you a set of teeth if you'll fix me a forty-foot pole on my front lawn." That's what was kind of going on then and it was tough times, really, tough times, yes.

SI: Was your uncle's practice in Asbury Park?

HR: Yes, in what they called the Electric Building, because it was also the home of Jersey Central Power and Light, yes. He was on the ninth floor of the Electric Building [at the corner of Bangs Avenue and Emory Street].

SI: Did you have to go out and get a part-time job to contribute to the household?

HR: Things were so damn tight, I was out trying to collect my uncle's bills, rapping on people's door, a dumb-ass kid. "What do you want?" "You have a bill in Dr. Rockefeller's office and you haven't paid any money on it. Now, can you pay?" "I can't pay today." "Well, if I come back next week, could you pay me some money?" "Yes." So, I did that for a while and I wasn't terribly successful, because I would rather have been out playing baseball. [laughter]

SI: Would people give you a hard time or try to blow you off, because you were just a kid?

HR: Oh, yes, and, many times, you went back, they wouldn't answer the door, that kind of stuff. It was really tough. People don't understand what the Great Depression was like. It was tough, when they had the bread and soup lines going in Newark and in New York. It was tough.

SI: Were there any Hoovervilles in the area?

HR: Hoover?

SI: Hoovervilles, the cardboard cities where people who were homeless would build little shelters.

HR: You didn't see much of that in Asbury Park, no, but Asbury Park issued scrip, right. That was a sign of, "This city is really suffering," all right, and then, the bank, when we had that

famous run on the banks, that was [something]. I came home one afternoon and my grandmother and my uncle were in the parlor at 600 Fourth Avenue, which was their home and became my home. I said, "There's talk all over the school that there's a run on the banks," and my uncle says, "Yes, there is and the reason why there is a run is because everybody's running down to the bank and trying to get their money out. The banks, no bank can possibly field all the requests from their constituents. They can't do it. They haven't got enough money on hand to do it," all right. So, anyway, I thought that over for a while and I had 106 bucks in that bank, which I had earned up at Deal on the caddy shack. I caddied up there and earned, netted, 106 bucks. I kept saying, "I want to go down to the bank and get my money out," like a little kid would, right, and I was a little kid. So, finally, my uncle says to me, "Harry, keep quiet. Your grandmother has thousands of dollars in that bank. Now, I don't want to hear any more from you." [laughter] That was it, but it was hard. All the banks went under, except one, which was his bank, the Asbury Park National Bank and Trust Company. They went to a federal place and came home with a truckload full of money, and then, unloaded the truck into the bank and made sure that all the people standing there trying to get in the bank could see these huge packages of money being brought into the bank, to try and change their mind about rushing the bank. As I said before, no bank can possibly pay all of its creditors, can't be done.

SI: Yes.

HR: Okay.

SI: Were there other signs of the Depression's impact in the area? Did you see homeless people coming through town?

HR: Not too much, no, no. There wasn't so much poverty on the street, but, when you went over to Springwood Avenue, there was plenty of poverty--well, I wouldn't say plenty of--just poor people over there on Springwood Avenue. You know where that is?

SI: Actually, I am not that familiar.

HR: Asbury Park?

SI: Yes.

HR: At one time, Springwood Avenue was acclaimed as one of the five worst streets in the country, okay, because the Depression was hitting them hard. When you went out Springwood Avenue, every other door was the door to a cigar store. You went in, they might have a box of cigars under the counter for sale, right. In the back room, which you couldn't get in, was where they had the numbers game. Do you remember the numbers game? Did you ever hear of that?

SI: I have heard of that.

HR: Sure, where you tried to pick a three-digit number, right, and you would get paid and you only had to bet one penny. That was how tight it was. Every other door was, you walked in, there was a counter. Under the counter, in the glass counter, was a box of cigars, the only

merchandise they had to sell. They were running this crap game and card game, poker, in the back room in the place, every place you went in. Then, you would see other things, too, that weren't quite as nice as that was, but those poor places were absolutely bare. There would be nothing else in there but a box of cigars, cheap cigars, a nickel a box--not a box, but a nickel apiece. That was part of the impact that you saw from the Depression hitting all over, really. That was a tough deal.

SI: Were there many speakeasies there, before Prohibition was lifted?

HR: Well, they weren't really flooded with them, because you had to have some capital to start one up and those poor people didn't have any capital. They were just stretching things out as best they could and living along.

SI: Can you tell me a little bit about the boardwalk area? Was that area experiencing its heyday or was that also suffering from the effects of the Depression?

HR: Well, there was a clash between the Great Depression and the boardwalk, because they're both aimed at two different things. One is the poverty of the people and the other is the people trying to enjoy themselves and get away from the mess at home, where they're probably not living the best food diet that people could have. They constantly worried about, "Where's my buck coming in that I can pay a bill with?" and stuff like that. So, to offset that, you got a lot of people coming down on weekends. The weekend was the time to see a significant increase in the population of Asbury Park and they would be strolling the boardwalks and things like that. The mere fact that they could afford to get on a train and come to Asbury Park was indicative of their well-being, right, but the homesteaders in Asbury Park were just struggling. That's the way it was.

SI: Did you have other jobs besides working for your uncle and working as a caddy at Deal?

HR: Well, then, I got into a steady job for the summer and I was a locker boy at Eighth Avenue in Asbury Park, the Eighth Avenue Bathhouses. You could make pretty good money a week in that job. What you were doing [was] wringing out bathing suits, bundling them up nice and neat and give it back to the person, and you could make out well in there and the hours were all fixed and everything. We had a hell of a good boss. I saved his butt one day and, ever after, he loved me. One Sunday, Sundays, we used to get the excursions coming from North Jersey, the silk mill people. These were rough people, rough, and they would come down to spend a day on their excursion, right. So, one day, I was tending the first women's aisle, which was right at the entrance to the bathhouses and people coming in went by here. Seated over here was the boss, an old man. He was seventy-some-odd years old, right there, and a creepy-looking guy comes in, passed the ticket office, pays for his ticket, gets in, comes in. The boss tells him, "Get across the way, on the other side. That's the men's aisles over there. Go to that first one right over there." The guy says, "I don't want to go there. I want to go upstairs," and Mr. (Post?) says to him, "I told you you're going over in the men's aisles over there." Mr. (Post?) is sitting in the chair and I'm over here, maybe ten, fifteen feet over here, behind him, or not behind him, but in back of the guy. With that, the guy swings and he hits (Post?) right in the chin and spins him right around in this rocking chair that he was sitting in, right. I started to run and, when I got

close to him, I hit this guy right across the back with my knee, came right up with my knee and right on his back and around his neck. I've got a full nelson on him, right, and down we go to the floor. The next thing you know, the guy is trying to gouge my eyes out, right. So, Mr. (Post?) is not saying a word. He's out. He's just sitting in the chair, he's out, and the guy was about to clock him again as I arrived. So, I got him on the floor and my buddies came around. We would holler, "Locker boy," and that meant, "Get out and help. Somebody's having trouble out there," right. All my fellow locker boys come out and they're all looking at this guy and looking. Meanwhile, this guy is trying to gouge [my] eyes out with his fingers. So, I hollered, "Get a hold," [laughter] and they all jumped in. They grab a leg, grab an arm, and they got this guy down. I've still got him with the half nelson around the neck and here comes the cop. Then, I saw a lesson in how cops handle people. Jimmy (Leone?) comes in and he was a hell of a nice cop and a good guy and he always had a word for the locker boys and just an all-right guy. He comes in and he says to me, "All right, kid, get out of the way now." All right, so, he gets me out of the way. He gets down, he gets a hold of this guy, he says, "Come on, get up here, get up, get up." He gets the guy on his feet. Now, he starts, "What's the matter with you?" [Editor's Note: General Rockafeller imitates the policeman slapping the man] and I watched him, I mean, and he was slapping this guy something awful, just beating him across the face with his hand. "What are you doing this kind of thing for? Why'd you hit that man? Can't you hear me? Can you hear me now better?" and all that crap, but, I mean, while he beat the hell out of him with his hand. [laughter] It was so expert, the way he knew when to shift to this hand, he come in with this hand. I was watching this whole thing. So, he says to me, "Kid, come here." His favorite name, I think, was "Kid." So, he says, "Come here, kid." He says, "We're going down to court and we're taking you. You've got to come with us." So, we went on down to court and the court, by this time, had this guy down there. Jimmy came over to me and he said, "This guy had a box of pills in his pocket and we think they're drugs, right. Don't go near him and don't bother him if he comes back down there. Just call us again, okay." So, that was the only little incident of how bad things could be. At times, these people coming from Bergen, Passaic, up in that area, would get loaded and the more they got loaded, the more nasty they got, but, outside of that, it was a perfect job to have, because you made good money. We made more money than the lifeguards got paid and the lifeguards were working seven days a week and getting thirty-five dollars, thirty-five bucks, seven days a week, all day long, yes, okay.

SI: You said you went to St. Rose of Lima for the first year of high school. Then, the last three, you went to Asbury Park.

HR: Yes.

SI: Tell me a little bit about Asbury Park High School, what interested you the most there in the classroom and what you did in athletics.

HR: Well, when you came out, I had played with St. Rose and, there, I saw an unusual thing, [laughter] talk about Depression. You had to pay the coach. Anyway, I went out for the basketball team, right, and I got on the squad. We practiced a few days and the coach announced that, Saturday, we would be going to St. Mary's Cathedral School in Trenton, St. Mary's Cathedral. So, I got on with my buddy, who was the center on the basketball team, a good Joe, but he was big. He was six-foot. He was a big man and, today, you've got them seven-foot,

right, basketball, but, anyway, he and I hitch a ride out of Asbury Park over to Trenton. We get into Trenton, we get another ride up to St. Mary's Cathedral and get out and we're going in. We go down to the locker room to get dressed and I'm looking around while I'm getting dressed. I see the coach over there. He's got his clothes off and he's putting his trunks on and he's getting his jersey out, St. Rose, number so-and-so, right. So, I said to my buddy, who was an old hand there--he was a senior on the basketball team--I said, "What is he getting dressed for?" He says, "Kid, you'll see it fast enough. Don't talk about it." I had no idea what was going on. So, in the second quarter, well, when we first go up to get on the court, the coach is right in the group, going up on the floor, sitting on the bench. We get up to play, the coach gets up and plays. [laughter] Afterwards, I'm thinking, "This guy came here to St. Rose. Two years ago, he was here and somebody's got to recognize him, saying, 'What the hell are you doing out there playing for St. Rose? What are you doing playing for St. Rose? You were here two years ago as a player.'" That just got shunted away, so that the referee could blow a whistle on the thing. [laughter] Nobody thought a thing of it, played the whole game. Now, you know you've got Catholic priests standing there, right? What kind of a way is that to run a Catholic school, right? So, a few weeks later, I get a phone call from a kid over in the Holy Spirit Lyceum and he says--and I'm in high school now, right, and I'm playing basketball--this guy says to me, "Harry, we want you to come over and play with us today. We're playing St. Rose." I said, "How the hell can I play? I played there two years ago. What are you talking about?" "You come over. We'll get you in the game." I went over there, got in the game. The priest, Father Duffy, who I knew well and he knew damn well I was not in Holy Spirit School, he was sitting on the bench. The hatred between Holy Spirit and St. Rose was that gross, that they could tolerate that kind of thing. So, we used to say that quarter, that fourth quarter, was one of the longest fourth quarters in the history of basketball. [laughter] We were keeping the time over here, right, and it got to be a tie score, played on, played on, played on, and, finally, we won this game. Nobody ever said to me, "What in the hell are you doing in here? You were here two years ago," priests, nobody said anything about it, didn't think of it, didn't even think it was unusual. "Let the kid play. [laughter] What do you mean he was here two years ago? I don't remember him being here," you know what I mean? So, that kind of thing went on all the while, between the coach playing, and then, you going back and playing down in the grammar school area. People can't visualize that today, where everything is pretty tight stuff, yes, okay.

SI: Which sports did you play at Asbury Park High School? Did you also play basketball?

HR: I played basketball and I played baseball. Basketball, I was on what they called the JV. I was a little, short, fat kid and I was on the junior varsity team, but I loved it and I played it. In baseball, I pitched for the baseball team and I enjoyed that, but they had stuff. I mean, when you went in, there was plenty of uniforms around. You could take your pick and things like that. St. Rose had nothing. It was barely keeping the team on the floor, all right.

SI: Did Asbury Park have any big rivals that stand out in your memory?

HR: Neptune was always a big rival and to even today, I think, if they would allow them to, they'd be a big rival, but Long Branch was a big rival, Freehold was a big rival. It was all the people that were around them and the favorite big rival was Neptune, any sport, any sport. In Asbury, just before I got there, they had some colored boys which they brought up out of the

South to come up and play football. They took them to play in the annual Asbury Park/Neptune football game and these guys, it developed later that these guys had graduated from high school years ago, down in Georgia or wherever they were from. They got hoisted up here and played for Neptune. These are the little things that you observe around, funny kind of things that, as a kid, you look and you wonder about it, "What the hell is that guy doing, putting that uniform on? He's our coach. That's what he's been doing all week. What the hell is he getting dressed for?" "You'll see, kid, you'll see." [laughter]

SI: What else interested you at Asbury Park High School, academically or extracurriculars?

HR: They were good teachers, they were good teachers and they taught well. The other thing that was interesting, at St. Rose, you began at, say, eight o'clock and, every hour, you'd shift subjects. There might be one study hour, right. Asbury Park was, like, four and three, four hours of in the classroom and three study hours. So, it was a different approach to things. Asbury Park was all lay teachers. There was no extra guys around at all.

SI: When did you graduate from Asbury Park?

HR: '34.

SI: At that period in your life, when you graduated from high school, what did you see for yourself in the future?

HR: I had not really settled on what I wanted to make my career, right. I knew that I wanted to go to college and I worked for a couple of years in Efinger's Sporting Goods store in Asbury Park. I think I was there two years and the money was so thin. Again, there was the Depression banging up against everybody, that Efinger's just finally said, "I can't make it any longer," pulled out, but I liked working there, because it was the sporting world. I loved being next to it. Did you ever hear of Efinger's?

SI: No, I have not.

HR: Yes, they were gone by the time you were around there.

SI: Were you still in Asbury Park when the *Morro Castle* ran aground?

HR: Oh, yes. [Editor's Note: On September 8, 1934, the SS *Morro Castle*, a luxury liner, caught fire off the coast near Asbury Park, New Jersey, during a nor'easter, resulting in 137 deaths.]

SI: Does that incident stand out in your memory at all?

HR: Oh, yes. What happened was, the *Morro Castle* caught fire. They were coming up from the Caribbean or Cuba or someplace down there. The night before the boat docked in New York, they had a party, a homecoming party or something, and a fire broke out someplace on the boat. They immediately set up SOS calls, and so forth, and I guess the ship's captain felt that it was controllable, right, but it was burning like hell and people were jumping off the boat,

swimming ashore. They had life preservers on. The water was rough as hell. There was a nor'easter in progress and these people, with the nor'easter, the wind was coming in this direction and it was blowing the people to the south a little and come ashore. They were, I'd say the boat was two miles at the most off shore and burning up pretty well, and then, the people started jumping overboard. Now, I had run down to the beach for the second day, when it's starting up the coast. I could see the people coming in through the waves and there was a big chop going, like this, and they're getting covered up pretty well. It was pretty rough. So, then, I went home for dinner. My brother was there and he said, "I'm going back down to the beach. I want to see what's going on there. There's talk about they're going to let this boat free soon." So, my grandma said something about, "Don't stay out too long," and so forth. So, he's gone, he's gone a little long. The phone rings and he says, "The *Morro Castle* is coming ashore and it's aimed right at the Convention Hall," and I said to my grandmother, "I've got to go there. I've got to go there, Nana. Nana, I've got to go there. My brother's down there. Why can't I get down there?" all that. [laughter] She says, "All right, you go, but you be back here by nine o'clock." "Yes, Nana." So, I did what she told me to do. I didn't ever think about telling her, "No, I'm not going to do it," that kind of stuff. She saved my life, really, and I treated her as nicely as I could. So, anyway, the phone rings, it's my brother. He says, "The *Morro Castle* is coming right into the Convention," not the Convention; yes, the Convention Hall, right. "It's coming right into the Convention Hall," and my grandmother said something about, "Oh, Harry's on his way down there to see you and see the boat." So, my brother said, "Well, I'll look around for him when he gets here." So, I started out and I go over from Fourth Avenue over to Fifth Avenue, start down that street, Fifth Avenue. As I get down towards the ocean more, I see a very strange sight, which is the smokestacks of the *Morro Castle* are, instead of being upright, like that, they're like this ...

SI: Tilted.

HR: ... Which means that the stern is way down and the boat is coming through the water like that, instead of like this. So, I got hustling down there. It was so grotesque to see those smokestacks up over the silhouette of the building, right. So, we get down there and, boy, the people are gathering. They estimate the crowd was ten thousand people on the part just above the Convention Hall, on the beach, ten thousand people. So, I got down and I got over on the Convention Hall railing where I could see. I was watching the thing. One of the things that happened was that, out the side of one porthole, there's a large flake of paint. When the wind blows and it gets turned over, the inside of that flake had a lot of rust on it and it looked like somebody's arm hanging out the window. Now, people are screaming to get in the water and get aboard the boat and the cops are keeping them all from doing just that. It's quite a go-around with you. The water would rush in, the people would all run back up towards the boardwalk. Soon as the water went back, they'd come down there again and it kept going like that. So, now, some of my buddies have gathered around. So, we're talking about, "You know, I'll bet if we got up on top of the Paramount, we could get over across to the Convention Hall and we could look over the roof there, down. We'll be looking right down into the boat," which is what we did. We went up the Paramount, got out their--what do you call them?--the sky view or whatever it is, the window that's up on the roof?

SI: A skylight?

HR: Skylight, yes. So, we got up there, and then, we got across the boardwalk portion, and then, we came out on the basketball hall's portion, on towards the ocean. Now, we're looking down right into the boat and the boat is swinging like this. It's grounded on the front end. It's grounded. When it grounded, it was coming in this way; when it grounded, it got hung up and it swung around this way and, now, it's swinging back and forth. The question is, if it swings back and forth a little bit wider, they're going to knock down the Convention Hall. It was quite a night, quite a night. Well, it didn't get that bad. So, after we messed around a little bit more, after the people got through screaming every time that flake of paint went and it looked like somebody's arm hanging out the window, so, then, the cops began to [say], "Okay, let's get out of here now. That's enough for tonight," and that kind of stuff. So, we got on out and, the next morning, WCAP, WCAP, City of Asbury Park, okay, they're on the radio, "Oh, God, this could be a terrible tragedy. It's swinging back and forth. If it comes any closer, it's going to knock down the Convention Hall. It's big enough to do it." "Oooh," and everybody down the boardwalk is getting away from the Convention Hall because that's coming down if the boat swings any more. There wasn't much doing other than that hollering on the radio about, "Watch out, because if it ever hits, it's bad news." Then, they got a sea anchor on it, on the boat. A sea anchor, you just put down the sea anchor as far as you can into the muck and the sand and everything else. Then, you run your cable from the sea anchor back to the boat and through the pulleys, and then, you put the power up here to pull in on that cable. When you're doing that, this cable is coming back from the seaward sea anchor, which is out here, right, and, now, they're pulling the boat out ass-end first to the sea anchor offshore. That was after days and days of, "Hey, it's moved almost a foot today and almost two feet," right, but this day, it went off and went up north to be taken into a yard up there and worked on. What they said was--not they said, the radio said, WCAP was Asbury Park's big-time radio, big-time--they were talking about, "How dangerous it is for us to be here while we're talking to you on this radio." [laughter] Well, that's to build it up, but, anyway, that went off. The talk around was that, in the days that the boat was pulled offshore, they had more visitors to Asbury Park than they'd had the whole rest of the season and the shop owners were glad. They'd had a miserable mop-up to their season and they're not getting any money at all, but, in that intervening period, where instead of attracting people by watching the new boats and all that kind of stuff, in that intervening period, the shopkeepers did more business in that, like, one to two-week period than had been done all week in Asbury Park. They were very happy, and so forth.

SI: When did your brother enter Rutgers?

HR: He was supposed to graduate in 1936. What would that put him in, '32?

SI: Yes, 1932 to 1936.

HR: Yes.

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Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 2/27/2017

Reviewed by Pamela R. Henry 9/28/2017