

Jane Sickles Segal Transcript

ROBERTA BURSTEIN: --August 14th, Bobbie Burstein is interviewing Jane Segal at her home in Brookhaven. She'll tell us more about that later. I want to thank you very, very much Jane for agreeing to be interviewed by the Women's Archives. What made you do it? What made you decide that you would be a victim for us?

JANE SEGAL: Well, I thought it was a very interesting project.

RB: I'm glad you did. Good.

JS: And I actually, I was flattered to think that I was an interesting subject.

RB: Oh well—

JS: We'll see about that.

RB: That's true. But it was very nice of you to allow it. Thank you very much.

JS: Not at all.

RB: I read in the form that you filled out that you were born in Dallas.

JS: No. That was my mother.

RB: Oh, your mother was born in Dallas. Well, I was fascinated with that thought.

JS: Yes.

RB: Was she one of the first Jewish women in Dallas?

JS: Oh, no. There was quite a large Jewish community in Dallas, I believe.

RB: By the—when she was growing up.

JS: Yeah. And—

RB: You were born in Ohio.

JS: I was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. That's right.

RB: Right, right. And you had two sisters.

JS: I had two sisters.

RB: They were older or younger?

JS: One was older, and she was a half-sister. Her mother died when she was an infant. And her father married my mother. He married the boss's daughter. That my grandfather had a whiskey business in Cincinnati called S. Klein Company.

RB: So, did your father enter the whiskey business at that time then?

JS: He was an employee of the whiskey business.

RB: I see.

JS: Yes. That's correct.

RB: Oh, I had--. That was--. When you were growing up in Cincinnati, were your family very involved in Jewish customs and Jewish life?

JS: Not that I remember. We belonged to what was called Rockdale Temple, which was a prominent temple there. But my mother lost a child at birth. And the rabbi came to see her and said something that upset her very much. He said it was G-d's will. And she couldn't believe that G-d would take her child. And she became a Christian Scientist at

that point. And so my sisters and I were raised as Christian Scientists.

RB: That is interesting.

JS: That's right. And we went to a Christian Science Sunday school. My younger sister is eleven years younger than I am. I don't think she went to Sunday school at all, however. And I don't know whether she--. She hasn't really practiced the Jewish religion all her life.

RB: When you went to Christian Science school, that—because that seems quite different to me, was there a lot of things to be learning to practice that style of religion?

JS: Well, the Christian Scientists used as their “Bible” Mary Baker Eddy.

RB: Right.

JS: And, we were supposed to read chapters in her book, as well as the New Testament, so I'm quite educated in—

RB: In the New Testament.

JS: In both testaments as a matter of fact.

RB: The thing that's most strangest about that religion is how they handle illness.

JS: That's right.

RB: What kind of preparation did they teach you?

JS: Well, they have trained practitioners. They're like teachers. And they help you think properly, takes a lot of thought. And their principal statement is that man is created in the image of G-d. And if man thinks properly, he can control his well being.

RB: And did that work for you and your family?

JS: It worked very well except that when I went to college I sort of lost my interest in it. And then when I—after I was married and had children, I decided the children had to know exactly what they were. And so that I raised-- We sent them to Jewish Sunday school and joined a temple when they became old enough to go to Sunday school.

RB: And so you've been-

JS: And we've been Jewish ever since.

RB: So you've never had any further connection to—

JS: With the Christian Scientists, no.

RB: Oh. That's interesting.

JS: That's right.

RB: Was—did—were there any unusual things that you did as a child in Cincinnati? You know, that's what was part of the middle west.

JS: That's right. My grandfather came over from Germany with the proverbial fifteen cents in his pocket. And he founded this liquor business. S. Klein was Sam Klein. That's my grandfather. And there was—there was and still is a very lovely Jewish population in Cincinnati. It's a German community. And there was a restaurant called Over the Rhine. It's probably called Mecklenberg's, this wonderful beer garden we used to go to in the summertime.

RB: So the orientation was towards German.

JS: German. That's correct. Yeah.

RB: So did your--. Your sisters went to high school in Cincinnati, too?

JS: Yes, yes. My older sister went to Walnut Hills High School. And I went to Hughes High School, which is in Clifton, a part of Cincinnati. And my younger sister went to private school, the Lobspech School.

RB: And what did--? Did you participate in athletic activities or, what kind of social activities were you part of as you were growing up?

JS: Well, I went to University School, which was a private school, with a large Jewish contingent. The--. I used to walk to school with my neighborhood friends. And I grew up with my schoolmates. Oh, I lived on a dead end street, which was very important. It was called Mann Place. And I knew everybody on the street. And there were children in every house practically.

RB: Sounds charming.

JS: Yes. Well, it was very nice. And there was a public library on the corner of the street. And that's where I got my first books. And I was so proud to have a library card.

RB: We treasured that. I remember.

JS: Yes. Yes.

RB: And it was wonderful [unclear].

JS: And it was a nice community. Cincinnati is a wonderful town.

RB: I've never been there.

JS: Yeah, very nice—

RB: So you went to Bryn Mawr College.

JS: Your family approved of your going away from home.

JS: Oh yes. Yes.

RB: That was not a problem.

JS: No. It wasn't a problem. When my mother was a girl her father took her to Europe. He said that was a better education than sending her to college, which she always regretted. She wished she had had a college education. But she was a very bright woman and very active in Jewish affairs in Cincinnati. And I don't know whether you've ever heard of the UOTS, United Order of True Sisters.

RB: Oh yes, I have.

JS: Well, she was president of that organization.

RB: Does that still exist anymore?

JS: I don't know.

RB: I never hear about it anymore.

JS: I don't get the Jewish newspaper anymore from Cincinnati. So I don't know.

RB: But we used to have it here in Boston.

JS: Oh, you did?

RB: Oh, yes.

JS: Oh, yes.

RB: But I never hear about it anymore.

JS: Well, she was very active in that. And I know she spent a great deal of time on the telephone talking to other board members.

RB: That's a lot of work.

JS: Yeah.

RB: It is. Well, that's interesting.

JS: That's right.

RB: Did any of her children—meaning you and your sisters—follow in her footsteps in that organization?

JS: No. I was--. After I was married I was a member briefly, I think. But I wasn't active. I remember they invited me to give a lecture, a book review. That's right. The one and only time I've ever tried that. I didn't enjoy that at all.

RB: That's so interesting, because I interviewed Bubble Gittelsohn.

JS: Oh really?

RB: She also gave book reviews. And one time Rabbi Gittelsohn—this was, I think, after they were married—he came in to hear her. And it was a very nerve wracking experience.

JS: Oh I can imagine.

RB: But that's funny because she mentioned that, too.

JS: Yes.

RB: So what did you study at Bryn Mawr?

JS: French.

RB: Oh.

JS: French.

RB: Oh.

JS: I've always been good in languages. And I—my mother insisted that I have private lessons before going to college. And I had a wonderful French teacher in Cincinnati. I can't recall her name now. But she was blind.

RB: Blind?

JS: Blind. But she could turn the pages. She knew exactly what she was doing.

RB: That's incredible.

JS: That was my first French teacher.

RB: Did you study any other languages?

JS: Well, I majored in French in college. I also took German. And, of course, I had a German background.

RB: Yeah.

JS: My mother spoke German and my grandmother spoke German. My grandmother was born in New Orleans.

RB: Oh my.

JS: Yeah. And I don't know how they got to Dallas, somehow or other. I think probably my grandfather was in Dallas or maybe she--. I really can't say. I don't remember how it

all worked out. But I know I had relatives in New Orleans.

RB: New Orleans and Dallas are not so far apart.

JS: Not too far.

RB: So—

JS: Yeah, I guess, that's right.

RB: Did you spend all four years at Bryn Mawr?

JS: Yes. Well I spent my--. I had my junior year in France.

RB: Oh, of course.

JS: Yes. That was nine months. Three months in Narcy [Nice?] where you had intensive language lessons. And then we went to Paris for six month. It was wonderful.

RB: Oh, that must have been wonderful.

JS: It was great.

RB: Did you go with anyone else or—

JS: It was with a group. And I forget the name of the group now. But there were young people from different parts of the country.

RB: They were also taking that third year?

JS: Yes. Right. So we started at the Sorbonne and then we had private lessons, also.

RB: And did you study other subjects in French?

JS: Oh yes. No English spoken.

RB: Right.

JS: It was very good.

RB: Oh, that was quite an immersion.

JS: And of course we went to the opera, and we went to see plays. And it was very exciting.

RB: It's a terrible job, but someone had to do it.

JS: That's right.

RB: Oh my. That was wonderful.

JS: That was my--. I--. Oh, and in Nancy we lived with a private family. And I had another student from America from Cincinnati.

RB: Oh, that was good. Was she a friend before you went?

JS: No. I knew her then. And we got along fine.

RB: Oh that was wonderful.

JS: Yes. And then when we were in Paris we had the same private lessons, you know. She lived on the Left Bank with a family. It was very interesting. He was very active. It was at the time of Hitler and—or am I ahead of myself? Anyway, yes, it was the early thirties. We graduated in '32 so I was the—

RB: It was the time.

JS: Yeah. And it—she enjoyed living with a family that was very active and very anti-Hitler in Paris. And afterwards, after we were home for a couple of years, her host—the gentleman of her host family—was walking down the street and was shot in the back by an anti-Jewish person in Paris, which was very sad. Yeah. But, anyway, we had a wonderful time.

RB: Was your family concerned about your being there at that time? Was that a dangerous, worrisome time?

JS: No. I don't think so, not yet.

RB: Before all the real trouble started.

JS: I graduated from college in '32. So I was there--. Well, I was there in '30 and '31. That's true. Yeah. But it was just beginning in France.

RB: Very scary.

JS: Yeah.

RB: When you graduated from college you came—well, you came back to finish the fourth year.

JS: Oh yes.

RB: Yeah.

JS: Yeah. Yeah.

RB: Did that seem very tame to you?

JS: No. It was a little difficult because being away for a year. You know, friendships change. But I had a very close friend that I lived next door to, and we resumed our

friendship as before.

RB: And when you graduated—after you graduated, what did you do then?

JS: I got married.

RB: That's the usual.

JS: I got married two weeks after I graduated.

RB: I see.

JS: And my poor mother, she had to do all the preparing by herself.

RB: So tell me, where did you meet Bob?

JS: He took my older sister out first.

RB: Ah-ha. In Cincinnati?

JS: In Cincinnati, yes. My sister was three and a half years older than I was. And Bob was the youngest of nine children in Chillicothe, Ohio, which is a small town ninety miles north of—maybe fifty miles, north of Cincinnati in Ohio, a small town.

RB: So your sister knew him.

JS: He and his two brothers got jobs in Cincinnati. They were newspapermen.

RB: At that point.

JS: Yes, uh-huh. And, of course, all the mothers invited them for Friday night dinner.

RB: Of course.

JS: So I was sitting on the front porch when he was taking my sister out.

RB: This must have been a little delicate situation.

JS: Well, no, it didn't bother us at the time. And my sister married somebody else and moved to New York.

RB: Well, that helped.

JS: So there we were. And I had an eighteenth birthday, and my mother invited Bob to be my escort at my birthday party. So that started it. We went on from there.

RB: So when you went to France for the year, were you seriously seeing him up to that time?

JS: Not really. But he wrote the most beautiful letters. So that did it.

RB: Yeah.

JS: And my parents drove to New York to meet me at the boat, and we drove home. And when we got to our house, who was sitting on the front porch, but Robert Segal.

RB: I see. Well, he didn't want to let any grass grow under his feet.

JS: No.

RB: I see. So when you were married where did you live? Was he still in Ohio at that point?

JS: Oh yes. Yes. He was on a Cincinnati Post. And he got to be a promotion manager of the Cincinnati Post. And so we had an apartment, which my mother had all ready for us.

RB: Wow.

JS: Furnished.

RB: Wow.

JS: We were very lucky.

RB: Yes. Well, wonderful.

JS: We didn't have to struggle.

RB: That's wonderful. I don't think it necessarily adds to your character to struggle.
[Laughter]

JS: It might.

RB: It might.

JS: But that was fine.

RB: And what were you doing at that point? You had just married and you were living in Cincinnati.

JS: That's right.

RB: And did you have any work that you did?

JS: Well, I belonged to the Sisterhood and the League of Women---. Well I guess the League of Women Voters came later. But, no, I was busy pushing a buggy after two years.

RB: Tell me about your children. You have two children.

JS: Two children, that's right, a son and a daughter.

RB: Who is the oldest?

JS: My daughter was born first. Yes. She was born in 1934.

RB: Well that was fairly soon.

JS: Right. Yeah. Yeah. And then Bill, my son, was born in '37.

RB: You were busy. You had your [unclear].

JS: Yes.

RB: So now, what was the event that made you leave Cincinnati, Ohio?

JS: My husband got a job here in Boston as--. Oh, after being a newspaper person in Cincinnati, he became the first director of the Jewish Community Council in Cincinnati.

You know, at the time of Hitler, there were Nazi groups in all the cities in this country. And so the Jews got together and formed community councils to fight antisemitism. And he was director of the council in Cincinnati, which was one of the first ones formed. And then he was offered a job here in Boston to be director of the Jewish Community Council.

RB: Oh it was--. That was the community council work that triggered the job offer.

JS: Yes. Yes.

RB: I see.

JS: So we moved to Boston.

RB: I see.

JS: Right.

RB: Was that a difficult thing for you two?

JS: It was wartime, and very difficult, because we had to wait two weeks for our furniture to arrive. So meanwhile we were staying in—what do you call it--? What do they call them now? A bed and breakfast place—

RB: Yeah.

JS: With the two little kids. But we were able to put them in school. So—

RB: Did you know anyone?

JS: Yes. We knew Marjorie and Dick Morse, who lived in Warborn.

RB: Oh, good.

JS: Yes. They were wonderful to us. Also Bob through--. He was active in the National—NCRC, National Community Relations Council.

RB: Yeah.

JS: And so he knew many people connected with that. The Barringers, Walter Barringer—

RB: Yes. I remember them.

JS: Yes. They were wonderful to us. I remember when we were staying in that bed and breakfast place before we could get into our house, before our furniture arrived, they let us have the freedom of their lovely home while they were away on Sunday. And it--. People were wonderful to us.

RB: Oh good. I'm glad.

JS: And the Morses--. Bob had taken Marjorie out before she was married.

RB: Were they from—were they from Ohio?

JS: She was from Cincinnati, yes. That's right. Yeah. And she met her husband--. Dick went to Harvard, I guess. And I guess she went to some school, I forget, here in Boston. I guess that's how they met. Anyway, we were very close friends.

RB: So what community did you move to in Boston?

JS: First of all, we moved to Newton Upper Falls, Elliot Hill. You know where Elliot Hill--
?

RB: I've heard of it.

JS: Yeah. And that was lovely up there. We lived on top of a hill. And, of course, we weren't used to all those snowstorms.

RB: It takes some getting used to.

JS: Which made it very difficult to go any place when it snowed.

RB: That's true.

JS: Or come home safely up the hill. But that was quite an experience. So I vowed never to have a house on a hill after that.

RB: Oh, I can understand that.

JS: But then we moved back to Bob's hometown, Chillicothe, Ohio, where he became editor of the newspaper there.

RB: Oh, so you—

JS: Afterwards—

RB: Oh, so you—

JS: After we'd been to Cincinnati.

RB: So how many years were you here in Boston, in Newton?

JS: Well—

RB: At the beginning.

JS: We didn't move--. I'm confused now. Let's see.

RB: You moved from Cincinnati to Newton and then back to Cincinnati or—

JS: No, no, no. We moved from Cincinnati to Chillicothe, Ohio. That's right. I got the sequence wrong. We were in Chillicothe five years. And that was a wonderful experience.

RB: And that's when your children were young, right?

JS: That's right. Yes. Both children [unclear]. No, I went when my daughter was six months old. And then my son was born while we still lived there. But we came back--. I came back to Cincinnati to have my children at Christ Hospital.

RB: That was good.

JS: My daughter was—

RB: That's good.

JS: My daughter was born. And, yes, and I didn't want to change doctors.

RB: No. I'd appreciate that.

JS: So, anyway, my parents still lived in Cincinnati at that time. So I stayed with them.

RB: Yes.

JS: So—

RB: So where are we now? He went to--. He was the editor of a newspaper in—

JS: In his hometown of Chillicothe, Ohio.

RB: That must have been very exciting.

JS: It was wonderful, just wonderful. We made very good friends there, of course. And we had moved twice there. The first house, it was a small house. And we moved to a larger house when the children were approaching. It was on top of a hill. [Laughter] But that was nice. And it's a small town. It's highly organized. Many committees, you know. So I was busy.

RB: Yeah. The typical—

JS: Yes, the typical small town activities.

RB: So it was from being editor of the newspaper in Chillicothe that you then came to Boston, Newton.

JS: No. The newspaper--. When he was hired to run the newspaper in Chillicothe, Ohio, they said they would make him editor if he would beat out the competition. Well, it didn't work out that way. He beat out the competition, but the editor of the other paper got the job, which was quite a blow.

RB: I see.

JS: We had two young children at that time. But at that time, that's when he got a job in Cincinnati as director of the Jewish Community Council.

RB: And it was from there—

JS: From there that we came to Boston—

RB: As the director—

JS: The director of the Jewish Community Council here in Boston, metropolitan Boston.

RB: That must have been really quite difficult, because you said you were strangers to the Jewish community in Boston, and you—

JS: Except that as director of the community council in Cincinnati he went to the national organization—

RB: Oh, I see.

JS: Meetings.

RB: Yeah.

JS: And met people in many communities, including the ones in Boston, and Walter Barringer was instrumental in getting him his appointment here in Boston.

RB: I see. Oh, that's interesting.

JS: Yes.

RB: So did you like coming to Boston? Did you find that a good move, other than being difficult?

JS: It was very difficult.

RB: Of course.

JS: Yeah. It was tough. But people were wonderful to us, as I say. The Jewish community here was wonderful, very helpful.

RB: You were a member of Temple Israel at this point.

JS: Yes, because my husband was a good friend of Joshua Liebman. He knew Rabbi Joshua Liebman, when Joshua Liebman wore short pants.

RB: From Chillicothe, Ohio.

JS: No, Cincinnati. Josh Liebman went to Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. And he was still in short pants. He was a genius.

RB: Even geniuses get cold legs. [Laughter]

JS: That's true. But we were good friends with Josh and Fran Liebman.

RB: I see.

JS: And I guess Josh probably had a hand in his getting a job here in Boston, too. Yeah.

RB: So when--. I know that Rabbi Gittelsohn thought very highly of your husband. I know that—

JS: They were very good friends.

RB: They were.

JS: Yes.

RB: So obviously, you remained as a member of Temple Israel.

JS: Yes. We remained. We joined both temples. We were founders.

RB: That's right. That's what I want you to tell me about.

JS: That's correct.

RB: Wait a minute. I'm going to stop the tape because I want to turn it over.

[end of tape 1, side A]

RB: Okay. You started to tell me about being a founder of Temple Shalom.

JS: Temple Shalom.

RB: Right.

JS: Because at that time the Hebrew—no, not the Hebrew Union College. The-- I guess it was the NCRAC, National Community Relations Council, wanted to start a temple—

RB: In the suburbs.

JS: In the suburbs.

RB: Yes, I know about that.

JS: In Newton.

RB: Yeah.

JS: Yes. That's right. [Unclear] Temple Shalom.

RB: Right. But how did Bob get to be involved with that?

JS: Bob was the first president of Temple Shalom. And we were in on the forming of that temple with other young couples in Newton, which was a wonderful experience. And these people are our best friends still.

RB: Is that right?

JS: Yes. Yeah. We worked together. It was a lot of work. But it was exciting, very exciting. They rented a big old house in Newton as the temple site, you know, until we had enough members and enough money collected to build a new temple.

RB: It's a lovely building

JS: And it's a beautiful temple.

RB: Lovely.

JS: Yes. Yes it is. But that was a wonderful experience.

RB: Isn't that nice?

JS: Yes. Yes.

RB: But you still maintain your Temple Israel affiliation?

JS: No, not since Bob died.

RB: No, I mean at the time.

JS: Oh yes. Yes, we did.

RB: My goodness.

JS: Well, he was very friendly with Gittelsohn.

RB: Yes, I know. I know.

JS: And, yes--. But then after Rabbi Gittelsohn and--. I don't remember exactly. I guess it was after Bob died that I let the membership in Temple Israel go because it was too far for me to go.

RB: Yes. I can see that it is. So how do you handle that now?

JS: I belong to Temple Shalom.

RB: And you find it easy to get there.

JS: Well, my son goes with me.

RB: Oh, that's fine.

JS: Or my son or daughter-in-law—

RB: Well then, that's, of course, the reason to go.

JS: But I don't go as often as I should.

RB: Well, that's neither here nor there.

JS: In fact my son, who has moved to Lexington, which is wonderful—

RB: Oh, that is nice.

JS: Yes. They live in Lexington, about seven minutes from Brookhaven. And they're thinking about joining the temple, the Reformed temple in Lexington. So I don't know exactly what I'll do, but I'll see.

RB: Yeah. Well all those nice choices.

JS: All my friends are here in Temple Shalom.

RB: Yeah.

JS: Yeah.

RB: Well, that's interesting. I noticed in your questionnaire that you said that you were the school's secretary--at which of the Newton schools--. Yeah. Newton public schools.

JS: Both of my children had flown the nest. I needed something to do to keep me busy.

RB: Of course.

JS: And Bob was in some organization with the superintendent of schools in Newton—and I can't remember his name. He's since just gotten a job in New York and I don't know where he is now. But--. What was I talking about?

RB: How you got to be the secretary of Newton schools?

JS: Oh yes. He was friendly with the superintendent. And he mentioned to him that I was looking for a job. And the superintendent was very impressed that I had graduated from Bryn Mawr College. And he said, "Well, one of my principals needs a secretary."

And at that time I had been taking secretarial lessons. I had gone to business school and took typing. I learned to type. And so I had a smattering. But I had never worked before in my whole life. I had volunteered, volunteered in Newton/Wellesley Hospital and other little jobs. I was very active in the PTA, of course.

RB: While your children were—

JS: Yes, in elementary school. And--. But I wanted something. I wanted a job, something regular to keep me busy. So, luckily, I got a part-time job as a secretary to the principal of the Horace Mann School in Newton. And that's very interesting. The seventh grade teacher's room was right opposite my office. And the principal of the Horace Mann School was also the principal of the Carr School, another school in Newton.

RB: Really?

JS: So he was part-time.

RB: You could be a principal in more than one school?

JS: Yes. Well, the Horace Mann School was a smaller school. It was a small school. But he was principal of both. So naturally, he spent most of his—a lot of his time at the other school. So I had the office to myself, which was just great.

But the seventh grade teacher was across the hall. And she was a great help to me. But that was a great experience. I enjoyed that.

RB: Was the Horace Mann School an alternative style school?

JS: No. No. There's one in New York called the Horace Mann School.

RB: Oh, I know. I grew up in New York so I know about that.

JS: Oh yes, yes.

RB: No. But there is a school in Newton that—

JS: Well, it's not--. It's for handicapped children, I think, isn't it?

RB: Well, no, that isn't what I mean. No. It had a little different style curriculum. It was a little freer.

JS: Not in the public schools.

RB: No. Well, I could be wrong. Obviously, I am.

JS: Well, it may now. I don't know. But it didn't at that time.

RB: So during all of this time, was Bob always with the—

JS: Jewish Community Council.

RB: That was—

JS: Right.

RB: Where he spent his career. I always really thought of him as a newspaper person.

JS: Well he—

RB: So why is that? Why do I have that memory of him?

JS: He was. Well did I tell you that the newspaper in Chillicothe was--? Oh, yes, I told you. That he was promised the editorship—

RB: Yes, yes.

JS: When he put the other opposition—

RB: Yes.

JS: Out of business.

RB: Yes.

JS: Well, it didn't work out that way. He lost his job.

RB: Right. But I sort of remember him—

JS: And he came back to Cincinnati as director of the community relations council in—

RB: But in that position he must have written a lot of articles for newspapers, which is why I associate him with that.

JS: Yes. He wrote a column, a weekly column in the American Israelite.

RB: Oh. Well, I would never have seen that.

JS: The American Israelite is the oldest Jewish newspaper in the United States. And his brothers bought it.

RB: Oh.

JS: So that he wrote a column, a weekly column, for that newspaper.

RB: Did he write a column for the Advocate, too?

JS: And--. Yes, when he came here. He first of all wrote a column in the Jewish Times. Is that still in existence?

RB: Yes. But it's very uninteresting.

JS: Oh. Too bad. Anyway, when--. Then he was--. He syndicated his column. And it appeared in various cities and in the Jewish Advocate. And then he retired from that job when he became—went into the community relations business. The newspaper business was his first love. Yeah.

RB: Well, I always think of him in those terms.

JS: That's right. That's right.

RB: When your children were growing up did you have certain customs or food that you—traditional kind of food that you—served for holidays, or things that you did as a family to celebrate holidays?

JS: Well, as I said, I was a Christian Scientist when they were young kids. But when they got old enough to go to Sunday school, then we celebrated. We had Friday night services and we celebrated the Jewish holidays from then on.

RB: Did you have certain things you made that were, you know, that your family thought were special for certain holidays or not particularly?

JS: In the days before my mother became a Christian Scientist, we used to have Friday night candles, lit the candles and celebrated Jewish holidays. I remember Passover. And we had wonderful meals. But, of course, we abandoned all that during the Christian Science period. And when my children were old enough to go to Sunday school, I thought it was important that they should know what they were.

RB: Was your mother still alive at that point? What did she think about that?

JS: I don't know. She didn't have any objection. I think she was alive. Oh, surely she was alive at that time. I don't think it bothered her.

RB: It didn't bother her. Good. But I can see where, you know, she was so distressed at the other incident.

JS: Did you ever know of Rabbi David Philipson?

RB: No.

JS: He was the rabbi of the temple in Cincinnati.

RB: Who made this [unclear].

JS: Who made--. She was very angry with him.

RB: Yes, I know. That was quite a story. Do you have anything else that you would like to tell us on your tape that maybe I didn't think to ask you? You know, a certain area of your life that I didn't think to ask because I don't know enough to ask.

JS: Well, let's see. I mentioned our five years in Chillicothe where there was no Jewish-- . There was a Jewish community there. But most--. Bob's father was an Orthodox Jew. And his sister--. He, as I say, he was the youngest of nine children. And I think only--. The oldest brother, the oldest, Sam, was married. And he lived in Cincinnati. But there was an unfortunate rift in the family and the family wouldn't have anything to do with him and his family, which happens in many large families.

RB: It does.

JS: But the brothers Ben and Henry and Abe were--. Henry and Abe were also Jewish—pardon me, newspapermen. And Henry and Abe bought the American Israelite, which was the Jewish weekly in Cincinnati. And I suppose it still is. But Bob became promotion—promotion manager of the Cincinnati Post, as I said before. And his boss was Ralph Quinn, who was a wonderful man. And he was the one who heard of the position available in Chillicothe, Ohio. And he helped him get the job—helped Bob get the job in Chillicothe.

RB: You wrote about your childhood that you had loving parents and a strict mother, explanation point.

JS: Absolutely, very.

RB: But they let you go away to college. I mean, that's some loosening of the reins.

JS: I think that my mother regretted so not having gone to college herself, that she was very anxious that I go to college.

My older sister went to what they called a finishing school. And it was in Connecticut on Shapan Point near Stratford, Connecticut. I forget the name of the school. It was a private, so called, finishing school. And then she married a young man from New York and moved to New York.

RB: Oh. And that's the sister who—

JS: That's my older sister.

RB: Who used to go out with Bob.

JS: That's right.

RB: Yeah.

JS: Yes. Yes. [Laughter] He took her out first. That's right. I used to be on the front porch when he came to pick her up for a date. That's right.

RB: To get back to the incident where—in Chillicothe where he was out of a job having done what he was expected to do.

JS: That's right.

RB: That must have been a very demoralizing defeat.

JS: Yes, it was. It was difficult. And we--. I hated to leave the house that we had bought. It was a lovely house on a hill. [Laughter] But that's the way things worked out.

RB: So you would say that you've led an interesting life as a result of—

JS: That's right. A varied life, yeah. But it was exciting to move to Boston. And Boston is a wonderful place to raise children. And you have the seashore and the mountains, and lots of places to go. There are lots of museums.

RB: Oh, my, yes. And the Berkshires where I knew you just were.

JS: That's right. And, of course, Newton was known for its good schools.

RB: That's true.

JS: So that's one reason we settled in Newton.

RB: That's true.

JS: Yes.

RB: When you were involved with the school system were you aware of their excellence, you know, what they did to—

JS: Oh yes, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. So I was secretary or president of the PTA in the Hyde School, something like that in Newton High. That's where the children went.

RB: And so your daughter lives in Philadelphia.

JS: My daughter lives in a suburb of Philadelphia. And, yep, and she has two children.

RB: Very nice.

JS: And so I have six great grandchildren.

RB: Six great grandchildren.

JS: Great grandchildren.

RB: Oh. How many grandchildren?

JS: I have four grandchildren. Two children, four grandchildren, and six greats.

[Laughter]

RB: Now you know what to look forward to.

JS: That's right. Yes.

RB: Isn't it wonderful?

JS: Yes.

RB: Well I want to thank you very much, Jane, for agreeing to be interviewed and for taking this time.

JS: Well, sure.

RB: It was really very kind of you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]