Morris Kleiner

RECOLLECTIONS OF FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND BUSINESS:
POLAND, CANADA, AND TACOMA, WASHINGTON, 1889-1974

Interviews Conducted by
Malca Kleiner Chall
in 1972
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INTERVIEW HISTORY

Morris Kleiner was born in Poland in 1889, the third son of a well-established Jewish family. At the age of eighteen he joined relatives in Calgary, Alberta where he learned the lumber and logging trade, the English language, and many facets of social and economic life in the developing Canadian and American West. At the age of thirty he had already established his own retail lumber business in Tacoma, Washington, he had just married Pauline Weinfeld from Montreal, and he was beginning family life in an apartment above the horse stable in his Liberty Lumber Company.

During the following half-century, in addition to helping rear three children and providing patriarchal guidance to eight grandsons, Morris Kleiner became a highly regarded leader in the Tacoma civic and Jewish communities, and a successful and respected businessman. In 1974 he had been in the lumber business in Tacoma continuously for sixty years.

Throughout his eighty four years--whether living in Poland, in small logging and mill towns in Canada, or in Tacoma--Morris Kleiner has observed and actively participated in a type of community life which, after two world wars and unprecedented technological development, has almost disappeared. There are, in some corners of Europe, Canada, and the United States communities which show traces of that former social and economic order, but it is best understood through the accounts of persons who can recall how these communities looked and what it meant to live and work in them. The contrast between then and now can be partially grasped by an answer to a question on how far Morris Kleiner lived from his grandfather. "Ten hours, horse and buggy," can be compared to "three hours, jet airplane," the distance of his California grandsons from their grandfather in Tacoma.

I had been working for the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library for three years when, through my familiarity with the methods and uses of oral history, I became convinced that an oral history memoir with my father, Morris Kleiner, would be of value to historical research as well as a treasured family resource. The plan to record the memoirs of my father materialized in 1970 while I was in Tacoma on one of my regular annual family visits. During dinner with my sister Josephine and her husband Kenny, we discussed the need to preserve some early family background about which we had only fragmentary
knowledge, and some facets of the history of the lumber business about which we had no knowledge. Our brother Herman, the family's family historian agreed. By November, 1972, I was able to persuade our father to take about two hours a day for three days to record his recollections. Reluctantly he agreed. By that time he was undoubtedly tired of shoving the project aside, and he must have been aware that he had memories to share with the family.

So we began. Using my outline (well-augmented by suggestions from Elwood Maunder, director of the Forest History Society in Santa Cruz), and relying on photos, documents, letters, newspaper clippings, and memory, we taped six hours of recollections in three days, usually between 10:00 a.m. and noon.

At that hour Morris Kleiner usually went off to his regular Kiwanis Club luncheon, or to meetings of the boards of the Boys Club or the Goodwill Industries. We did not record on Wednesday or Saturday because on these days he works from nine until six at the Model Lumber Company. Of course, he still drives, and both he and Mother take their non-driving friends to Temple services on Friday nights, or to luncheons and meetings during the afternoons.

Morris Kleiner is a doer. He considers a problem carefully from various aspects, then he acts. He can carry on a conversation as ably as most men and women but he is not verbose; he prefers to sum up a situation with a few well-chosen words. He rarely makes a mistake in grammar and he speaks with barely a trace of accent although he didn't learn English until he was eighteen.

Having to answer innumerable questions, to explain, to amplify, to internalize seemed at first a chore to him. Gradually however, he warmed up to the project, and began to add memorabilia and suggestions about topics which we should include.

In March, 1974, when I returned to Tacoma to help celebrate my mother's eightieth birthday, he was ready to review the edited transcript, to revise grammatical construction which he considered awkward, and to add a considerable amount of material which either he or I thought important enough to insert. Thus we spent several mornings, and afternoons: I rapidly taking notes, he, giving information, phoning his brother Leon, or calling in Mother for help on dates, names, and places, until we decided that we had completed the memoir. With the material in the appendix to fill in the narrative account, this personal
history, while not definitive, will I hope give the family the background which they sought, and upon which they can build their own individual reminiscences.

Ours has been a close family. Spouses marrying into the extended Kleiner family got more, no doubt, than they bargained for. As children, we knew the Kleiner relatives intimately because they lived in Tacoma, Seattle, and western Canada, and we visited often. During the thirties and forties, cousins from Austria and Germany came to live in Tacoma and Seattle, and they enlarged the family circle.

We were expected to live up to a (Weinfield-Kleiner) family code of integrity, of applied intelligence, of generous hospitality, and of leadership. As members of a minority group we were taught to respect peoples of differing religions and races. As second generation Americans we were taught to have enduring respect for the ideals of American democracy. As a family which had advantages, we were taught to consider the less fortunate. While the code at times seemed rigorous it has withstood the test of time. The roots of this code, as this memoir indicates, lie deep within the family—planted generations ago in Poland and nourished in western America.

Malca Kleiner Chall

12 June 1974
Hayward, California
I GROWING UP IN GALICIA

The Family Farm

Chall: Tell me please where you were born. This was where, in Austria or in Poland?

Kleiner: In Poland, in Kozowka on October 21, 1889. This was known as Galicia and was a part of Austria at the time.

Chall: Did your father have a farm then?

Kleiner: Yes. My father had a farm, and my grandfather had a farm and timber holdings in Bilitufca where my father had been brought up.

Chall: In timber holdings?

Kleiner: Yes, which were on a lease. You were not allowed to own any land, nor timber limits.

Chall: Nobody was allowed to or only Jews weren't allowed to?

Kleiner: Jews weren't allowed; but they could lease it.

Chall: Your farm was a timber holding or your grandfather's?

Kleiner: My father's farm was in Kozowka.

Chall: And what kind of farm was his?

Kleiner: The farm there was mostly wheat, oats, potatoes, and corn. He had two land leases, six hundred and some odd acres in each lease. They were leased from a Polish landowner, Potocki. He was a graf--
Kleiner: Hrabia Potocki.
Chall: Is that a title?
Kleiner: It is a title. H-r-a-b-i-a. That was his title.
Chall: Potocki?
Kleiner: P-o-t-o-c-k-i.
Chall: Was your father farming this wheat, oats, etc. at the same time your grandfather was still managing the timber lease?
Kleiner: Yes.
Chall: How many miles apart?
Kleiner: Ten hours, horse and buggy.
Chall: So how did your father happen to go so far away for his lease?
Kleiner: Well, because there was nothing else available close in in good land.
Chall: And why did he decide to go into growing vegetables and grain? Could he have found anything in timber?
Kleiner: Well, there was more demand for grain and my father was more suited for grain farming than his father was.
Chall: He was more suited to this other kind of farming?
Kleiner: Yes. He employed about forty men and they raised cattle, chickens, and geese.
Chall: What was done with all this grain and cattle?
Kleiner: The cattle were used, naturally, for the market in Tarnopol.
Chall: The chickens, geese?
Kleiner: The chickens were sold locally or killed off in summer. During the harvest season men and women
reaped, and they worked for a tenth—-it is a Polish word—a tenth share of what they cut.

At the end of the harvest?

At the end of the harvest season they would get a tenth of what they produced.

And that was all they got in payment?

They got some money besides, which was probably at the most about 25¢ an hour.

What about these forty men? Were they employed all the time?

They were employed all the time. They were plowing, seeding, and keeping all the machinery in repair. There was a threshing machine during the threshing season, and all the men and women were used during the threshing season. During the winter, most of the men were laid off, just a handful of men were left to feed the cattle and look after the horses, the barns and so on.

And they were also used to haul out the manure onto the fields. Under the contract with Potocki, all the straw that was harvested—was left after the threshing and so on—was to go back onto the ground as fertilizer; so it was all kept back of the barn, where all the cattle were, till it became fertile enough to be put back on the ground again. You were not allowed to burn any straw.

So they knew good farming practices then.

The farming all through this Galician country was more or less controlled by Jews. The Jews were the best farmers of any. Once, twice a year all the Jewish farmers or landlords as they used to call them—they weren't landlords actually—used to get together and play poker, I guess you call it, day in and day out and night in and night out for about a week. Just to get together. [Laughter]

From all over the area, miles around. If you had about 1200 acres, that was a lot of land?
Kleiner: That was a lot of land to take care of, yes. My father used to get up between four and five in the morning. In the summertime he was right on the ground all the time. Remember there were five sons and one daughter. Simon was the oldest, who afterwards also became a farmer in Zofiuflka, and at that time they also started a new farm in Maryufca which was just about a half hour walk from our place in Kozowka.

Chall: Also leased?

Kleiner: Also leased.

Chall: And by your father? For his own working?

Kleiner: Yes. Originally my father was in partnership with that one, with a family named Falkenflick (later Falk). His wife was my mother's sister. When the partnership was culminated the family moved to Tarnopol. Eventually they came to this country. One of the three boys settled in Los Angeles because of his health, one became a successful doctor in New York.

Chall: And that was what, also about six hundred? Was that the standard acreage?

Kleiner: About the standard acreage, yes. About the same as they have in Canada.

Simon was also a very good farmer. He was more of a sporty farmer kind. Horses and so on.

Chall: Did he raise grain too, and cattle?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. He raised grain. That farm that Simon worked [Zofiuflca] belonged originally to my grandfather, Greenfield.

Chall: That was your mother's father.

Kleiner: My mother's father. As he got too old to take care of the situation, Simon took it over.

Chall: Did the land owners, the Hrabias, whoever they might have been, just let the family continue to lease the land through the next generation if they had done a good job?
Yes, yes. There was no trouble of leasing the land as long as they got their rentals.

Well, how much generally—did they insist upon getting a certain amount out of it?

It was just a rental situation. So much an acre. I can't remember just how much it was.

That you had to pay them annually?

Yes, we had to pay them annually.

And then you were able to take as profit—your father—whatever he made out of it.

I remember that in order to get the lowest rental agreement on a new lease he would dress to look like a poor man who hadn't done so well during the past season.

They naturally had foremen to look after the workers. There was a man who looked after the field end of it—the grain and the growing of grain, potatoes, or whatever. And another man looked after the property on the grounds—that means the horses and the cattle, fixing wagons. Remember there was no machinery, at that time, it was all handwork. Horses—let's see now [trying to recall the exact word]—cows, steers—to plow with.

Oxen.

Yes, oxen, right—

Were any of your foremen Jewish?

Yes, the two men who looked after the outside and inside were both Jewish families.

Were they relatives?

No. They were not relatives. Those two men, they had foremen under them. Those men could just stand and look at the sun, just like I look at my clock here. They could tell what time it was, whether it was going to rain tomorrow; they were very clever
Kleiner: at this. They knew by the feel of things what they had to do on the farm.

Chall: How did your father learn how to do this kind of farming? Where did he learn it?

Kleiner: He learned it from his father; it goes back generations.

Chall: But if his father was doing primarily timber, did he also have grain?

Kleiner: He also had a farm.

Chall: Oh, I see, so he learned it there. Uncle Simon learned it from his father?

Kleiner: Yes.

Chall: Did you have any timber on your land at all?

Kleiner: No timber. It was all prairie.

Chall: What about water and all that sort of thing?

Kleiner: We had to drill for water and we had regular pumps. We were right on a river, and the cattle and horses used to go down to the river, and the geese used to go down to the river.

Chall: What river was that, do you remember? Was it a good river?

Kleiner: Yes, it was a good-sized river. I don't remember what it was called.

Chall: You had milk cattle as well as meat cattle?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. Four women used to milk the cows every morning, about five o'clock in the morning. In the summertime they would go out onto the field and milk the cows there. And in the winter and the fall of the year, they used to milk in the barns. And we used to make butter, and cheese, sour milk, buttermilk, and everything else that comes from milk. The butter and cheese used to be sold locally, or most of it sold in Tarnopol to dealers there.
Chall: Who took it in to the dealers, to the market? Did your father?

Kleiner: He had a man who worked for us for many, many, many years. He was our official driver, regardless of whether he drove two horses or four horses; he used to drive as many as four horses. And the containers with the butter, he would take them to the market. And that is the way it went on week after week, and month after month.

Chall: Was there one day when you would take it into the market?

Kleiner: Yes, one day a week unless weather prevented it.

Chall: And when you took it into market, was it bartered or did you get cash for it?

Kleiner: Some was traded, some was traded. My haircuts were always traded for butter. [Laughter]

Chall: What else got traded?

Kleiner: Clothing. Boots. There were five of us, remember, that had to have boots all the time and uniforms. You see, when we went to school from the age of ten, we were required to wear uniforms.

Chall: Would the man who made the boots get so much milk and butter for the year?

Kleiner: It was all handmade. The same with our uniforms. We used to bring a tailor during vacation time to our farm, and he would make our uniforms. And after a couple of years, they would take that same material and turn it over—it was two sided—it was made in such a way that you could turn it over and make uniforms over again.

Chall: So the rest of it was a cash proposition.

Kleiner: All the rest was cash, yes, sure. Because you had to have cash to pay the labor and so on.

Chall: Now this labor, these forty men, and the women who worked too, were they usually man and wife?
Kleiner: Not necessarily, no.
Chall: Did they live on the property or outside of it?
Kleiner: Some, possibly a half a dozen, lived near the horses. And the women--there were three women who worked at home all the time.
Chall: In the house?
Kleiner: In the house. One was a cook, and one was a cleaner, and so on. They always lived at home.
Chall: And they lived in the house. They didn't go away at night?
Kleiner: No.
Chall: And were they paid anything?
Kleiner: Oh, yes, they were paid. They got their board and their room naturally and some money, which possibly was very little, and their clothing--whatever they needed.

Education

Chall: Were these people who worked Polish peasants? Had they had any schooling?
Kleiner: Very little, very little. Possibly you could say as high as third or fourth grade, something like that, because we had good schools right in that village. That is where we originally all went to school.
Chall: Who went to the school?
Kleiner: The village. All the boys.
Chall: Only boys went to school?
Kleiner: The girls too, but our girl [sister Toncia] was born so much later. Then we went to school afterwards, into the cities. Into Tarnopol. There
Kleiner: were five of us in high school at the same time.

Chall: What about the children of the men who worked on your farm? Would they have been going to the same schools?

Kleiner: They were going to school in the village.

Chall: Did you go to village schools too in the beginning?

Kleiner: Yes, originally.

Chall: So you went to school with the children of the men and women who worked for you.

Kleiner: Oh, yes. We all went to school together.

Chall: But you went ahead and they dropped out. Why would they drop out, and not go on beyond the third grade?

Kleiner: Because to go to school or college or whatever you want to call it, at Tarnopol, that took money. You had to board out and that took money. Quite a lot of these boarding expenses also came out of the farm products--produce.

Chall: How long did you go in to the village school? When did you start boarding in Tarnopol?

Kleiner: Well, from the age of five to the age of nine.

Chall: Oh, I see. That is the time when there is a difference between those who can afford . . .

Kleiner: You had to pay your way. If you made the grades, you didn't have to pay. If you didn't make the grades, you paid. My father paid. [Laughter]

Chall: [Laughter] He paid for all five of you?

Kleiner: Yes. To get a certificate with stamps on it. At the age of ten, we went to the school in Tarnopol. On your uniform, at the end of the first year, you got one silver stripe on your collar (you have seen those). And second year you got two; if you passed third year, you got three; fourth year four, and fifth year, you got one gold stripe; sixth year two,
Kleiner: seventh year three, and then you matriculated after that.

Chall: So it means that you all left home and boarded out?

Kleiner: We all boarded out.

Chall: At the time you were ten?

Kleiner: That's right.

Chall: When would you get back home, for weekends?

Kleiner: No, no. Just home for vacations only. Christmas time and summer vacation time.

Chall: How far was Tarnopol from where you were?

Kleiner: Just about ten and a half hours drive, horses.

Chall: That was kind of an early time to be leaving home. An early age really to go into a boarding school.

Kleiner: Yes. There was nothing else we could do because there was nothing in the village for higher education.

Chall: And I would guess that all the Jews sent their kids away to school. That was just expected?

Kleiner: You can see on the picture I have here [shows picture of his high school class in natural history, taken in 1907 which has the names of the students on the back] that most of the boys are Jewish or well-fixed Polish people. A lot of them lived right in Tarnopol. Tarnopol was a city; a big city.

Chall: How did the parents--both Jews and non-Jews--of the boys in the high school, make their living?

Kleiner: In the case of both Jews and non-Jews in the city, they had vegetable markets, meat markets, clothing stores--they were merchants and businessmen, the same as here.

   In the village, the Polish people owned small acreages, and besides that, in working for people
Kleiner: like us--leaseholders--throughout the seeding and harvest seasons, some of them could afford to send their kids to the city to high school.

The Jews in the village were, as a rule, butchers, carpenters, window installers, and may have had other minor skills. Some of them were really very poor, but they would do anything possible to insure an education for their children.

Chall: What was it like going to boarding school? You were about ten years old. They do it of course in England and they do it here in the prep schools so-called, but it seems kind of young to be sending kids off to boarding school.

Kleiner: Well, they were not boarding schools. We lived with families. We paid for room and board. We went to school.

Chall: You paid for room and board in somebody's home?

Kleiner: In somebody's home. And it happened many times, that there were eight or ten kids living in that same home. Lots of others boarded at the same place; and the board had to be right or my father wouldn't stand for it. He paid for it in money and in goods--butter or cheese or whatever it was. It happened at different times there that one of us, or one of them, would take sick with measles, or chicken pox, or some damn thing and everybody had to move out.

Chall: Quarantined.

Kleiner: Quarantined. We had to move out, so they had to find another boarding house in a hurry to put us in, and they had to be careful that we didn't bring any diseases too. So it was all inspected through the authorities there.

Chall: So actually you had somewhat of a home life in that kind of a set up.

Kleiner: Oh, yes. It was home. And they had to see that we studied and did everything that we were supposed to do. Not running around. You weren't allowed to be seen after eight o'clock on the street at night.
Kleiner: And you were not allowed to take any part in any politics, you see, you weren't allowed to do anything as long as you went to school. You were not allowed to take part. Oh, the same as it is here, we would sneak out and we would take part here and there.

Chall: Oh, I see. And the schools were just like ordinary school buildings then; you would walk to school.

Kleiner: The schools were real beautiful stone buildings. There was the realschule—that was the engineering school. And the gymnasium was a school for doctors, lawyers and so on. That is where they studied Latin and Greek languages and things like that. In the realschule (realna szkoła) we studied naturally Polish, which was our mother tongue, German, Russian, and French. We were so thoroughly trained that we knew more than the high school kids do here. These were both like upper grade high schools. A student matriculated from the gymnasium after eight years, from the realschule after seven.

Chall: Which one were you in?

Kleiner: I was in the realschule.

Chall: And the other boys?

Kleiner: The other boys were all in gymnasium.

Chall: How come?

Kleiner: I don't know. It is a secret to me. [Laughter]

Chall: You all seem about the same to me!

And when did you have to separate into one or the other?

Kleiner: At age ten.

Simon, for instance, he was to study as a doctor or a lawyer. And my next brother, Joseph, he took up engineering. He was an engineer when he was taken prisoner of war in the First World War into Russia, and he died in prison in Russia—
Siberia. And my third brother Bernard, known as Bunio, was a druggist in Warsaw, Poland. Leon studied in Tarnopol also, and he became a clerk in a banking business in Tarnopol.

But he couldn't have been very old, he was about eighteen when he left Poland for Canada [1912]. Well, you were all fairly close together in age, weren't you?

Just about two years between each one.

Were you all in the same boarding house, most of the time, or the same home?

Most of the time we were in the same home.

Well, that kept it lively. Jewish students didn't live with non-Jewish students, did they?

No. It wasn't exactly forbidden, but it wasn't an acceptable practice. I had an apartment for a while with a non-Jewish student, and he was questioned about it, but that was all.

Preserving and Preparing Food

Can you tell me more about how the people in the house took care of the food; kept their food in the winter and summer?

Well, we had ice refrigerators.

You mean you actually manufactured ice?

Well, when it froze in the wintertime. We had a big dugout, what they call a cellar. It was about fifty feet long and it was all stone inside and stone floors. And you could go in there in the summertime or in the wintertime. In the summertime it was just as cold as a refrigerator.

It was under the house?

A short walk from the house. And all the milk and
Kleiner: buttermilk, and the cheese, and the butter was kept in big stone crocks inside through the summer and the winter.

Anytime we wanted some, we would go to the cellar to get it. On the way back from there we had to pick up some wood. The woodpiles were between there and the house. We used wood and coal to heat the house with. And also the outhouses (separate for men and women) were a short distance from the house. So you learned to bring something back with you--either wood or water--when you came back to the house.

Well, it doesn't sound very good, but anyway that's the way it was. In other words you learned to work both ways, coming and going.

Chall: You said something about digging ice out of the river and using ice blocks. When did you use those?

Kleiner: The ice was chopped out in winter with axes and whatever chunks they could get were carried by horse and wagon to the basement. In the winter and summer, we used a certain amount of them in containers. They weren't like the refrigerators here, but there were containers that they kept cold and in which they stored some of the food. We had shelves built in the basement and in the ice box where we could put the jams--strawberry jams and raspberry jams.

We couldn't keep ice very long in the containers. When we needed ice for the house which was seldom, someone would go out and chip away a piece and put it in the ice box. But ice taken into the basement for storage there kept through the winter until summer. The blocks were chunks about fifteen to twenty inches wide. They were set on the stone floors, piled one on top of another, reaching almost to the ceiling which was about six feet high. So there was a stack of forty to fifty pieces.

Food to be kept was stored around them. In summer it slowly melted away.

Chall: What about the jams?
Kleiner: We used to grow raspberries and strawberries and all the rest. And that was made into jams by those same people who worked for us. It was put into jars and kept in a way so the ants wouldn't get it, because if the ants got at it, they would cut right through the parafin, right through to the jam.

Chall: How did they keep the ants out?

Kleiner: They put parafin on top the same as they do here.

Chall: But the ants could come into the storage room.

Kleiner: They had cabinets built that were more or less ant-proof.

Chall: Did you cook with coal and wood?

Kleiner: We cooked with coal and wood. We used to bake bread and cakes in great big ovens. We baked our own rye and white bread. The rye was as big as--oh, fourteen to sixteen inches round. And the white bread was braided, and that was done by the women who worked and lived in the house. Once a week they used to do that. And they used to do the cooking and housekeeping.

Chall: How was the meat kept?

Kleiner: The meat was kept also in that cold basement in special paper wrapping.

Chall: Was it hung?

Kleiner: It was hung from the ceiling, yes.

Chall: Was it frozen in the winter? Did you have meat in the winter as well as in the summer?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. We had meat in the winter. We had meat, we had fish, we had everything else. But most of our food was milk foods. Whether it was kasha [buckwheat], rice, potatoes, potato soup.

Chall: Corn, did you eat a lot of corn?

Kleiner: Corn meal. With milk or cheese, cottage cheese.
Kleiner: So most of the food consisted of milk foods rather than meats and so on. We had chicken generally on Friday and over Saturday. We used to have a man come and kill the chickens for us. And we used to take the feathers and afterwards, in the wintertime when there was nothing else to do, they would take the feathers and make them into pillows, comforters, and feather beds.

Chall: Was there nobody on the farm to kill the chickens? You had to hire somebody specially to kill them?

Kleiner: According to Jewish law the animals for our own use had to be killed for kosher and pass inspection. The same thing with the cattle that had to be killed by a shochet.

Chall: Would he kill quite a few fowl at a time?

Kleiner: Yes, a half-dozen. He came when notified that we needed some butchering done.

Chall: So it was mostly fowl, grain and milk products that formed the basis of your diet? Who ground the corn into meal, was that done in the city, in Tarnopol?

Kleiner: No, there was a mill in the village. We used to grind corn or anything that we wanted to for food purposes.

Chall: And what about the kasha; did you grow your own buckwheat?

Kleiner: Oh yes, we grew our own buckwheat all the time.

Chall: And other wheats, did you also eat other wheats? I guess for bread you had it.

Kleiner: Wheat, at certain times of the year it was cooked and mixed with poppy seed. Yes, we had pretty good food, not too digestable, according to our way of thinking now, but it was good.

Chall: Was it eaten like kasha with meat?

Kleiner: Yes, the same way.
Chall: Did you eat corn meal and did you use it for breads?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. Malai.

Chall: What about vegetables, how did you eat your vegetables?

Kleiner: Well, we had a vegetable garden there. Onions and everything that could be grown; radishes, and potatoes, and everything. Except that potatoes came from the big fields.

You see, for the winter, we used to dig about twelve deep ditches, about three or four feet deep and possibly forty or fifty feet long, and put all the potatoes for the winter in there and cover them up with straw and mud that came up over it like a roof. And in the summertime and the spring of the year the potatoes were just as fresh as they were when they were put in there.

Chall: Did you dig the potatoes out of these ditches in the winter when you wanted them for food?

Kleiner: No, these were not potatoes for our table. They were in the cold basement. The potatoes in these ditches were used for seed, for ourselves and for the market. Some were ground for cattle feed, for our use and the rest were sold.

Chall: What else about the inside, what was going on in the inside of the house?

Kleiner: Inside the house?

Chall: Yes, there was a lot of cooking, baking, jam making in the summer . . .

Kleiner: Just a regular house. I mean the housekeeping is just the same as any other place.

Meals

Chall: And all the family would sit down at one time and
Chall: eat dinner? How did you eat your meals?

Kleiner: When the meals were to be served, everybody had to be there. There was no monkey business.

Chall: How were they served, at what times? If your father got up at 4:30, did he eat something before he went out?

Kleiner: No, he would come back about seven o'clock and eat breakfast. Then, between ten and eleven we would eat a second breakfast. Lunch about one was our big meal; then there was something light about four and again at eight. We ate five meals a day, morning, noon, and night.

Chall: What would you eat for these meals?

Kleiner: For breakfast you would have cereal, or cottage cheese and fruit, and bread. A lot of bread was eaten at all times--white bread or rye bread. The food for breakfast was different depending on the season. In summer we would go out and pick fresh strawberries or other fresh fruit and eat it with cream. We boys drank milk, my father drank coffee.

We had a light lunch or second breakfast consisting of white bread rolls or rye bread either with butter or chicken fat, or plum jam. We children drank milk, buttermilk, or yogurt. My father drank coffee.

We ate a third meal or lunch--our big meal about one. This was a warm meal. We ate any leftover meat or chicken, cottage cheese, maybe boiled eggs, bread of course, green onions, radishes, carrots (raw or cooked), fresh from the garden. Possibly kasha with milk or butter or good chicken fat. They used to make a mixture of radishes and cottage cheese, and cucumbers--white radishes, the big ones.

About four o'clock we might have a glass of buttermilk, bread--something light.

Finally, at eight we finished off our day with fruit, or soup, or bread.

Chall: What kind of soup?
Kleiner: Pea soup, bean soup, potato, chicken soup.

The Family Home

Chall: What was the size of the house?
Kleiner: Well, it was a double house on top of a hill. It had a beautiful orchard in the back of it, and the house had about ten or twelve rooms. It was a big home. It was heated by coal stoves.

Chall: In each room? In the rooms that needed to be heated?
Kleiner: From a kind of a central heating point with pipes running into each room.

Chall: Like a big coal furnace then?
Kleiner: Yes. We also used to make straw bundles for the fire in the stoves. The stoves were built of marble. I think that is what you would call them.

Chall: And what did you mean by a double house?
Kleiner: Well, it had two wings to it.

Chall: With a porch between or something?
Kleiner: No, the porch was front and back. There was a porch overlooking the garden on one side and the woods where we used to play, like a park. Like this here, just like this here except there was no pool.*

*The Kleiner home, built in 1950, is situated on a portion of an old estate. The grounds are covered with established large trees: catalpa, maple, beech, mountain ash, and a variety of evergreens. A natural stream flowing through the hillside neighborhood comes into the yard and feeds into a large man-made pool before continuing downstream through other backyards, and finally into Puget Sound a few blocks away. Mr. Kleiner keeps swans in the pool. Wild ducks also call it home.
Chall: And what joined the two wings?

Kleiner: There was like a hallway in between where my father used to pay--like a pay station--to pay the people off, when they came to collect their money, which was generally on a Sunday.

Chall: You mean the wages of the workers?

Kleiner: Yes. The house was built before I was born. It was a stucco house--we call it stucco here. It was built out of mud and brick, painted a kind of a yellowish color.

What they used to call the cancelaria was my father's office. He had a safe there with gold handles on it, and all his books and stuff were kept there. It had a table, and chairs, and a couch where he would take a nap. People would come there to do business with him.

In the living room, which was a combination living and dining room, we had the regular furniture for that kind of room, with a cabinet like you see there [motioning to the dining room where against one wall is a very large antique rosewood and glass china cabinet].

Chall: And then a big kitchen?

Kleiner: Oh yes, we had a large kitchen with that oven we were talking about, and also a hot water boiler connected with it. Water was always hot and anytime anybody came in there was always hot water for tea. It didn't make any difference when they came in, there was always boiling water.

Chall: Did you have inside plumbing for water?

Kleiner: No, no, there was no inside plumbing. The water had to be carried in. We had a pump outside where the water had to be carried from. We kept barrels of water in the pantry filled regularly from buckets by one of the men.
Chall: Were dishes done in a sink in the house with water brought in?

Kleiner: The dishes were done in a sink in the house, yes. Water was heated; it was put in there.

Chall: What about soap? Did you make your own soap for dishes?

Kleiner: No, we used to buy soap.

Chall: You say you remember the house as always being there. Was it built by a previous owner or did your father build it?

Kleiner: Our house was big because it had been built as a duplex by my father and his brother-in-law (Falkenflick) who were partners for a while. We used both houses later. My grandfathers' homes were built on the same plan, only smaller.

Religious Observances

Chall: Now, I want to ask you about the religious life in the family. What kind of religion did you keep?

Kleiner: Well, we were not Orthodox, we were not Reform. We were just in betwixt and between. And living out in the village there naturally the services we used to have just during the holidays. My father fixed up, for the holidays, two rooms. The women sat in one room and the men sat in the other. And we had a baltwilly--the man who used to do the praying.

Chall: Sort of a rabbi?

Kleiner: Kind of a rabbi or cantor who conducted the services. My father was the go-between. He used to go to the women's quarters to show them where the place was. He was what we used to call the "misher." [Laughs at recollection.]

Chall: What men and women came? Were they from all around the village?
They were from around the village and also adjoining communities, because they didn't all have services so they used to come. And a lot of them stayed in our home for the night.

So it was a big event. Socially, I suppose.

Oh, yes. Sure.

That and the time you went to play cards, were about the only time that all of the Jews would mingle together in one place.

The only time we would get together. Oh, they used to meet in Tarnopol during the--certain days of the market, where they used to trade: buy horses, trade horses, with the horse thieves and so on. And so they used to get together in the coffee houses, you see. Many of those outdoor coffee houses--the same as they have in Israel and other parts of the country (they have them in Spain too, I guess). Other places. A coffee house--that's where all the transactions were done, same as the stock market and so on.

So they would meet there together and visit.

Yes, and exchange, or buy and exchange horses or cattle, or whatever the case might be.

Did the women go too? Would they have this kind of social activity? Did they go to the market or Tarnopol?

Not so much. Remember Tarnopol was a big Jewish community. All the Teitlebaums, the Sereths, the Shapus lived in Tarnopol.

How many people might gather in your home for the religious holidays?

Oh, possibly twenty-five to thirty. Couples. Some of the local people went back home.

And some stayed, which meant you had a lot of people.

The tailor was a local man; the butcher was a local
man; the window glazier was a local man; the man who looked after the cattle and horses and so on on the property was a local family; the man who looked after the outdoor work, the fields and so on, was a local family, with children and so on.

So they would just go home for the night. That meant that people came for Rosh Hashanah and then they came back for Yom Kippur. None of them stayed through the ten days?

No.

And other holidays, there wasn't much doing. What about Passover?

They just celebrated with their own families.

The rabbi was very itinerant, when he came.

And they used to have some of the younger boys sing in the choir, children of the different ones who lived there.

That was considered better than all of you going to Tarnopol for the day?

Oh, yes. Sure. Afterwards, years after we moved to Tarnopol—father moved to Tarnopol. Especially after I left there; remember I left there when I was seventeen.

Now what about in the house? Did you keep kosher, or any other holidays, anything special that would be considered a part of the Jewish religion?

Not one hundred percent. We didn't eat any pork or stuff like that—but it was just kind of fifty-fifty.

Is that the way your father had been raised by his father?

Not exactly. It was already the second generation. My grandfather used to come from Bilitufca; he used to come to Tarnopol, eat in the coffee houses and so on—not a hundred percent kosher, except that he
Kleiner: didn't eat anything that he wasn't supposed to. See his picture there?

Chall: And did your mother light candles on Friday nights?

Kleiner: Oh, yes.

Parents and Grandparents

Chall: Those were observances kept.

Kleiner: Well, you see my mother died years, and years, and years before. I possibly was, I don't know, eight or nine years old when she died.

Chall: Oh, you were that old when she died? I see. So all five of you sons were the sons of that mother. Her name was Malca.

Kleiner: That's right.

Chall: And then your father remarried after how many years?

Kleiner: My father didn't wait very long. He married a daughter of my mother's brother who lived in Zofiufca with her parents, the Greenfields.

Chall: He married a niece?

Kleiner: He married a niece. He married my first cousin, Leycia.

Chall: Was she much younger?

Kleiner: Yes, too much. Quite a lot younger.

Chall: Why did he do that?

Kleiner: On account of all the boys--

Chall: Yes, that needed raising.

Kleiner: He needed to raise them. And she lived possibly three or four years and died.
Chall: Did she die in childbirth?

Kleiner: No, no. My mother died, they think--in those days they didn't know--my mother died--because she drank a lot of water, so they thought she died from diabetes. They think. Just what her sickness was, they didn't know. When Leycia died, she had another sister, a younger sister, Genia . . .

Chall: A younger one yet?

Kleiner: Yes. She was the mother of my sister Toncia.

Chall: So she was even younger yet than your father.

Kleiner: She was younger yet.

Chall: Did she have any other children besides Toncia?

Kleiner: There were no other children. Some years after--I lived in Canada already--I heard that they divorced and Genia married a student I went to school with. Younger man [Dankner].

Chall: By that time Toncia was how old?

Kleiner: Very young--maybe four years old.

Chall: So she was left on the farm with your father--her father.

Kleiner: That is right. But then they all moved to Tarnopol.

Chall: I see. Gave up the farm then.

Kleiner: They didn't give up the farm, they just moved from the farm to the city. They still continued farming but under the supervision of other people. I wasn't there then.

Chall: How old was your father when he started farming, when he took up this six hundred-acre lease?

Kleiner: He possibly was in his--after the army generally--must have been twenty-two or twenty-three years of age.
So he moved into Tarnopol when he was still relatively young, wasn't he?

He moved to Tarnopol when he was about fifty-six. He married Clara soon after moving to Tarnopol. She came with him when they visited in 1930. She had been a schoolteacher.

And why do you think he moved off the farm and into the city?

Well, Leon was still there in school at that time, and possibly the older one Bunio was still in school at that time. And possibly pressure to bear from this younger wife. I don't know. Possibly they moved to the city and lived in an apartment.

What was the life like in the city? Tarnopol was a city made up of many Jews and non-Jews?

There were quite a lot of Jews. Just a mixture, a lot of Jews in the stores, and merchants practically were all Jews in every line. They ran hotels. And they had a synagogue, and theaters; they had a beautiful park right in the center of the city; they had the army band play there every Sunday afternoon.

And electricity came into being just about oh, a year or two before I left. There was a big celebration when electricity was put into homes. And also water was piped into homes and apartments. The only thing is that when you went to a bathroom, you had to put in a bucket of water into the tank, and then flush it. It wasn't quite fixed yet that the water was actually running into the tank, as it does here. You had to put in water and then flush it.

Still, it was an improvement over the outhouse.

Yes.

I want to find out about your grandfather and his timber-holding farm. Did you ever go to visit them?

Yes. Visiting them we picked raspberries, strawberries, and mushrooms. We knew one mushroom from
Kleiner: another, just for nothing else to do there.
Chall: When would you go?
Kleiner: During vacation time.
Chall: When they could spare you from the other farm, or was it when you were younger?
Kleiner: We would separate possibly. Two stayed home and two went.
Chall: So this was your father's father. [Jacob Kleiner]
Kleiner: Father's father, yes.
Chall: And do you remember anything about what they did on these timber lands?
Kleiner: They used to have people cut fuel, wood--mostly wood--no lumber as such. Just wood for fuel. They used to sell it to the people there, as fuel.
Chall: Would they mark special trees to be cut for this purpose in order to have a continual yield?
Kleiner: Oh, yes. Everything had to be . . . They also had a man there, an old man. My grandfather knew that end of it pretty well, and he had men working there who knew what they were doing.
Chall: Was that a big operation too? Did he have to employ many people all year round?
Kleiner: Just possibly twenty-five to thirty--depends on the time of the year they were doing it. But in those days it was a substantial operation. My grandfather was pretty well fixed. He wasn't a millionaire but he was well taken care of.
Chall: That was the main business then--to cut trees for wood.
Kleiner: That's all.
Chall: What was the size of the holding? Did they plant trees as well as cut?
Kleiner: About two hundred and fifty acres. No, they just cut. He used to sell logs to sawmills and so on. But he didn't do any sawmilling there.

Chall: Now what about your grandmother. What kind of a family did she come from? Do you remember her?

Kleiner: I remember her very well. [Baila] You can see her in the picture there. I remember her very well. What kind of family she came from, I wouldn't know.

Chall: Was she from a city, or was she from a country village?

Kleiner: Well, you see, most of these people came from that district of Grzymalow, which is more or less a Jewish city. That is where the Gottesmans came from, and the whole group lived there. And other sisters of my father lived there also. So did the Browns. Mrs. Brown was my mother's sister. He was an official of the city of Trambowla. The Jews held pretty good positions. The reason they held these better positions was they seemed to have a better education, suitable for the work they were doing.

Chall: They could figure.

Kleiner: Yes.

Chall: So your grandmother came from a little town. What about your mother, where did she come from?

Kleiner: My mother [pondering], my mother . . . my mother. Let's see now. See her father and mother ran a farm near Zofiufca, and where they came from and how, I don't know. The whole country there was so small that it didn't make much difference if they came from one little town or the other.

Chall: Were these arranged marriages then?

Kleiner: Most of those had a go-between, a shadchen.
Social Customs in the City and Village

Chall: What was the life of the Jews in the area? In the country, and then in Tarnopol? Was it different; did they feel isolated from the regular community?

Kleiner: Well, not exactly, they lived together. They were more sociable in those days, in the old country, than they are today here, in this country. Sunday and Saturday, naturally was a day of rest. The stores were closed. Sunday we used to visit. There were no automobiles, so they just used to walk around from one family to another and visit. Sunday was a day of visiting. There was always a question of have you got anything to serve them? They naturally had cookies and other such foods.

Chall: On visiting days, on Sunday, if you were concerned about whether you had people in the house--if you had food to serve people--how could you decide who was going to go visiting?

Kleiner: It was--oh, I don't know. There was no decision to it. People who were "somebody" in the community could always figure that there would be eight or ten people come to visit you on Sunday afternoon.

Chall: And this was true when you were on the farm, that people were coming to visit you?

Kleiner: No, no. This was in the city, not the country.

Chall: So the important people were called upon by lesser important people?

Kleiner: Well, friends, but--possibly the poorer--well lesser important is not very--not just right--because they were all important, everybody was important in their own light.

Chall: But they were poorer people, less wealthy?

Kleiner: Some people, the same as they are here, were looked up to more than others. They may not be richer or
Kleiner: anything, but they are looked up to more, and naturally they could expect more company than some of the others.

Chall: In other words people called on the leaders of the community.

Kleiner: Yes. And a lot of relatives, too, you know, that would come to visit you.

Chall: Now what about the Jews and their relationship with the non-Jews?

Kleiner: Well, when we lived in the village there naturally we were all looked up to because we were one of the --oh--the people who employed people. Employers were more or less looked up to more than others. There were a lot of Polish people who had small acreages, who employed one or two people also--were well taken care of and so on.

And then we had--now we are talking about the village--we had what they called a judge and three or four of his counsel. Then they also had a policeman. In any trouble that developed in the village, they all went to the judge. The name in Polish, Woyt, was different than judge.

After the--we are going back now--after the threshing season was over and everybody was happy, you know, we had a dance in our yard, a party, for all the people who took part in any of the field work on the grounds there, with the cattle and horses and so on. That would generally start about noon and it continued through the night, with liquor; and we furnished the food and everything they could eat. That was the last party after the threshing season was over and everything was put away and so forth.

Chall: The end of the harvest.

Kleiner: Yes, that was the harvest festival. That was a big, big occasion. And a lot of people from the community used to come. The judge and his counsel and so on.

Now getting back to that. At Christmas time, the
people who looked after the horses would bring a horse up the steps into the house and they would sing Christmas carols and so on, and eat and drink.

Then after that the people who looked after the cattle—the cows—the men and the women, they would bring a steer into the house—to that hallway into the house, and the same party would take place.

The second day of Christmas, the judge and his counsel would come and they would bring a bunch of wheat in a container and they would spray that wheat on the table in the dining room or kitchen, wherever they would be, and pray and thank God for the crop that we had this year, and wish us well and hope for more the next year and so forth. And they also got a party there, food and so on. They were the happiest days of any in the little village. Occasions that you would never forget.

So these were the Christians really who--

Oh, yes they were all Christians.

They were celebrating their holidays with you.

They were all Polish--

Catholics?

Greek and Roman Catholics—Polish and Ruthanian.

It was their form of wishing for a good new year, for all of you together.

All of us, yes. And thanking us for everything.

Were these kinds of special celebrations carried on in the other farms too?

The same way. It was kind of a--

--tradition.

Yes, tradition. Simon had the same thing on his farm and we had the same ceremony on our other farm when we were there.
Farming Activities

Chall: Can you tell me how you and your brothers and your father worked with the people in the fields during the harvest season?

Kleiner: The boys—when you talk about boys, I was possibly fourteen, fifteen years old. I would get on a horse early in the morning and go out to the place where the women were milking the cows just to be sure that everything was right, you see, that nothing was missing. And that was early in the morning; oh! I used to get up early in the morning! We worked there. We didn't know any different.

During the threshing season when they used to sack the wheat from the threshing machine, we used to haul that on a wagon with a team of horses to the warehouse. We would put eight or ten fifty-pound sacks on a wagon and bring it down to the warehouse below the hill. And I remember myself helping another man to put those sacks on, and bring them to the warehouse. Just pile them up, pile them up, eight or ten high. And then one time, I was buried under a bunch of those sacks, but I was saved, I guess.

Chall: They fell on you?

Kleiner: Yes.

Chall: This was during the summer of course when you were not going to school.

Kleiner: During the summer, yes.

Chall: You all had to work on the farm.

Kleiner: Oh yes, we all had to work, everybody was helping, as much as he could. Sweep, clean, whatever was necessary, because every grain of wheat to my father was gold, you see. There was no waste, you would just sweep. And it was cleaned afterwards; during the winter.

Father used to sell wheat for seed purposes,
but it had to be a certain grade. It had to be clean, it had to be a certain size. So we had hand-driven machines to sort the grain: you throw the grain in and turn the handle for hours and hours and hours. The grain would come out clean and the straw or--

--chaff--

--would go into one side. We used to feed the horses on it.

And who turned this wheel?

Women who were hired by the day to do that.

You turned it the way you would a meatgrinder--that kind of turning?

Right. It was a big machine; you'd throw in a sack of grain and it just comes through graded.

And then that clean seed would be sold? Would it be sacked too?

It would be sacked, yes. To start with possibly just spread it on the concrete floor, possibly eight, ten, twelve inches thick so it would ripen to some extent; and dry it. And every few days my father would go in and put his hand way down below to see whether it was heating, because if it was heating, it would be no good, it would just start growing again. So they had to send some people there to stir it up again, so it would keep dry without spoiling.

Farming back there was different from what it is here. There was no machinery. Before I left yet they had bone fertilizer spreaders. They were pulled by horses. As the wheel turned on this fertilizer spreader--the thing had spoons facing the ground--the bone fertilizer would come out and spread as they went along.

This was bone from the animal carcasses?

Yes, we used to buy that from bone fertilizer factories.
Chall: And what about your manure? Were you still using that?

Kleiner: Oh, we still used that just the same. Some places manure did a better job, still does now, possibly better than the manufactured fertilizers.

Chall: Well, at least there was a use for it; you had to use it.

Kleiner: We had to dispose of it anyway. Now, what next?

Chall: Well, what else can you remember about some of the farming activities? Like that one I didn't know about, milling the grain.

Kleiner: There was a machine that used to grind bundles of wheat or corn and separate the straw from the wheat or corn. And that was driven by horses—there were four horses, blindfolded, and they'd go around for hours and hours and hours, all day long, turning machinery wheels. They would stop to be fed. All day long, and they would just grind the wheat out of the sheaves. That was done in the wintertime.

Chall: First it was all bundled and put in the warehouse, and then in the winter it was taken out and these other processes took place?

Kleiner: Not warehouses. They were built outside in stacks in a certain way. It was a special way that they used to do that; but the grain part would be on the inside, you see. They would build them twenty to thirty feet high and then make a roof out of it too. But the water, the rain and so on, did not affect it. The roof was built in such a way that when the rain did hit it, the drips would come down on the ground but not on the face of the stack.

Chall: It was open then, it was open except for a roof? Did it have sides?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. It was built against one another and the inside was built up, built in the same way, but the outside was built in a way that the grain was inside.
This was the way you stacked the sheaves?

[Trying to explain the process to his city-bred daughter.] You see, as they cut the grain in the field there, with a sickle, they laid it down. And then when this bundle got to a certain size, then they would take this straw and make a binder out of it and bind this together.

Yes, binding of the sheaves.

Binding of the sheaves together. And then they would pick those up—and they would build them into a cone shape.

All right. Now what we boys had to do every once in a while—when they were working in the field—we would go in and feel the thing and say, "Well, you haven't got enough sheaves in there, it's too thin." And as they would pick it up with a fork to put it on the wagon afterwards, to haul it back to our field, the thing would go to pieces, you see. So it had to be a certain weight or a certain—

--circumference?

Circumference more or less. And tied properly so when you pick it up with a fork, you can throw it over without breaking it apart.

You mean you picked up this whole cone-shaped thing with a fork and tossed it onto a cart?

No, just the sheaves.

Oh, yes, another thing. I would come down on a horse early in the morning when they first started working, so two or three of the women would pick up one of those sheaves and throw it in front of me, you see—and wish me good luck. And that costs money, you see. You had to give them a dollar or whatever you wished. That was when the season first started. But I was there or my father was there. But they generally picked on all of us.

Let's see now, what else is there? Those are small things, but those are the things that were
Kleiner: happening in those days, when we were kids.

Those sheaves afterwards, you see, they used to get what they called, every tenth snop, or every tenth bundle. They each had their own space they worked in and they piled it up you see, and the man who was looking after the outdoors—the fields outside—he kept track of how many they had, because there was so many to a pack. And at the end of the season, after this was all accounted for, they got the tenth. They hauled it out themselves. In other words, let's say they did a hundred bundles, they would get ten. And they would get a tenth of everything they produced there [in the Kleiner fields].

Chall: That was grain. Was that also true of the fruit?  
Kleiner: That was true of oats, corn, and wheat, and so on. Anything that was in seeds. Now as far as potatoes were concerned, they were paid by the bushel, for digging it out of the ground.

Chall: Then they had to separate the wheat, and oats, and corn from the straw. How was it done?  
Kleiner: In the large threshing machine, which was a real threshing machine, the same as you see here, there was steam—it was a steam threshing machine. They had possibly, oh, forty or fifty men and women working for two to three weeks putting all that through the threshing machine.

During the winter they used to do some work with the horses going round and round and round.

Chall: And the women who turned the machine by hand. That was a different process?  
Kleiner: That was to get the seeds out and graded; to get the seeds out. The seeds came out of the large threshing machine you see. Most of it was done then. And that was about the whole story. When the thing was over we all celebrated.

Chall: Generally speaking, do you remember having good harvests most of the time? Was the weather favorable? The water favorable, and all of that?
Kleiner: We had good harvest practically all the time on all of our farms. Because they just knew just how and when to do it. And they were good farmers. My father's gang was, and a lot of the neighbors who were also in the same line--known as farmers here--used to be called "possessor," back in the old country. In German "Guts besitzer;" in other words, he was an owner of goods. He didn't own the land, but he owned what it produced.

Chall: So this was something they just learned, and if they treated the land well, they produced well.

Kleiner: That is right. Unless you had a hard winter or something like that, but as a rule the climate was pretty good. Occasionally we had a hail storm.

In the wintertime we used to come home for so-called Christmas holidays. We had a man who worked for us, by the name of Wasyl [Sampson] for many, many years. He was our driver. And in the winter he used to come into Tarnopol with the sleigh and horses with bells on and so on, and bring us from Tarnopol back home for the holidays. Every once in a while the thing would skid and all of us would fall out. [Laughter]

Chall: That was part of the fun. Did your father have a special way of treating his help that was any different from anybody else's way of treating the people who worked for them?

Kleiner: Treating them?

Chall: Yes. Were his relations with his employees any different from anybody else's at the time, whatever they were?

Kleiner: I don't think so, I think it was just ... it was a certain way of getting along; in other words, he was always talked to as "Pan"--Mr. You see there was no other expression for him. The boys were known as "panich," in other words, kind of a prince. So he was always looked up to very, very much with practically no--

See when we went to school, they were all Polish schools so-called. Sure you feel anti-Semi-
tism to some extent, but we were not bothered very much because we were brought up more or less Polish--the Polish language and so on and we had no trouble. Because most of our students that you see in that picture there, half of them were Jewish kids.
II  LEARNING THE LUMBER BUSINESS IN CANADA  
1907-1916

Arriving in Canada

Chall: How was it decided that you would come to Canada?

Kleiner: Well, the war [World War I] was staring us in the face. That was just the age that I had to be drafted. So you couldn't get an immigration visa to the United States, because they kept track of you; but you could get an immigration visa to visit your uncle, aunt in Germany. So I got a visa to go to Germany and I stayed there with Morris Teitlebaum in Barmen, Germany for a few days.

Chall: How was he related to you?

Kleiner: His mother was my father's sister. He was my first cousin. And after I was in Germany for a short while, they got my transportation to Canada. I celebrated my eighteenth birthday on the boat.

I came directly from Germany to Antwerp, stayed in Antwerp for a few days. Sosia Sereth [Mrs. Alex] and her three children were also on the boat. And then we arrived in Montreal. And through letters from the Sereth family to some friends in Montreal, we stayed with them, a few days. And from there we went directly to Calgary.

Chall: What was the boat ride like? Were you on a good boat?

Kleiner: The boat ride from Europe was a perfect ride, except that we didn't understand English well enough to order a meal properly. So all I could under-
Kleiner: stand on the bill of fare was sardines; it sounded the same.

Chall: But you came over first class?

Kleiner: Yes, that is one thing. My father didn't send me on steerage. We all came first class. And it was a beautiful boat. I don't remember the name of it now, but it was a beautiful ship.

When we arrived in Calgary, H. N. Sereth met us at the depot and started looking for my luggage and my luggage did not arrive. I lost everything that I brought with me. All the clothing my father was sure I would need. I had white shirts, nightshirts that were like the shirts that we wear here now, they were the same. And material for suits. All that was lost, basket and all. We didn't know enough when we were in Antwerp to transfer the luggage onto where we were going. We thought it all followed. We didn't know the difference. We started tracing.

In the meantime, we notified my father that everything was lost, so they did the same thing over again and sent another lot of stuff, to Calgary. [Laughter] And some months afterwards, by tracing, the chest arrived. It had a double lock. [Laughter] And the shirts were too good, they were like dress shirts. I couldn't use them to pile lumber with.

There was a Jewish store in Calgary, a first-class store owned by a man by the name of Benjamin, who traded my shirts for work shirts. The material for suits was just beautiful. I had a tailor make a suit for me months and months and months afterwards.

Chall: And the Sereths lost their stuff too, not just yours but theirs too.

Kleiner: Yes, they lost theirs too, but it all arrived afterwards.

Chall: You said you landed first in Montreal and then went on to Calgary?
Kleiner: Yes. I landed in Montreal. We had some friends in Montreal. [Pause]

I will have to go back a little ways there. You see, when I landed in Canada, I landed in Montreal as I said, and then I went to Calgary. In Calgary because my uncle Sereth, who had five daughters, lived in Calgary. [Henry Noah Sereth, almost always referred to by his nephews as H. N.]

Chall: I see, he had preceded you by some time.

Kleiner: Oh, yes. Many, many years. Mrs. H. N. Sereth [Rose] was my father's sister.

Chall: Was it planned that you would go to Calgary to be with them?

Kleiner: Yes. It was planned that I would go to Calgary at the same time as Alex Sereth's wife [Sosia or Sophie] and their three children were also to leave for Canada. Alex Sereth was in business with H. N. [his brother]. So I left with Mrs. Alex Sereth and her son Arthur, who now lives in Honolulu with his wife Billie, and her daughter Ruby [Goldberg] who lives in Portland, and her son George, who passed away a few years ago.

We all travelled together from Germany to Canada--after stopping in Montreal for a while with some of the relatives of the Sereth's that I don't remember--and we landed in Calgary.

Calgary was a very, very small community. They had no streetcars, no nothing. We all came by taxi from the train when we landed, to H. N. Sereth's house who lived in Calgary at that time. And Alex Sereth's family went to live with Alex, and I was living with H. N. Sereth and my aunt Rose there.

Chall: Alex had already preceded his wife and children?

Kleiner: You see the Sereths . . . H. N. Sereth was in the lumber business in the old country.

Chall: Where?
Kleiner: Well, Sbaraz, that's where they all came from--and Tarnopol. And they used to import lumber from Czechoslovakia and Romania. And they were selling it to the lumber yards in Lemberg, and in Tarnopol, and other communities in Galicia.

Chall: As lumber. They would buy it as lumber and ship it? They were middle men?

Kleiner: Yes. Afterwards, he left for the United States. He was lost for quite a few years. He changed his name to Serené and he was lost to the family--my aunt and five of her daughters.* They hadn't heard from him for quite a few years. My father and grandfather helped take care of the family while he was gone.

But slowly he started; he worked for the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company here [Tacoma, Washington]--

Chall: He did? He got all this way?

Kleiner: Yes, and for others until he learned something about the lumber business in this country. And slowly he accumulated some money and he got on his feet. He brought his wife and the five girls over to Calgary [November, 1905].**

Chall: He went to Canada then?

Kleiner: Oh yes, he went to Canada. Alex Sereth and H. N. got into partnership in Calgary in the retail lumber business, and that's when I came in, fitted into the picture.

The understanding my father had with them here

*Sophie [Weinfield], Cecile [Allen], Emily [Lieberman], Stella [Sameth], Clara [Neider].

**See appendix for diary of H. N. Sereth written during these years in the U.S.
Kleiner: . . . My father was pretty well-fixed. And he wanted to be sure that whatever money he was going to give me and Simon at that time, would be invested in land, nothing but land. If I didn't like it here I could always come back home. There was no law against marrying your first cousins, you understand. Maybe he figured at that time that I'd marry one of my cousins of the five. It was supposed to be Emily who married Moe Lieberman, but that is the way it is.

So I went to business college--

Chall: In Calgary?

Kleiner: In Calgary and learned English because I didn't know it at all. I knew a little French but I don't remember it.

And I started working in the lumber yard. The foreman at that time was a Canadian, and whether he did or didn't like me, or whether he was afraid of me in those days already, I don't know; but anyway, I worked pretty hard there. Ten, twelve hours a day was nothing, piling lumber and loading loads. He would send me for instance for a hammer--and [laughs] I would look an hour for a hammer; but anyway I learned English slowly.

I used what they used to call the Langenscheidt Method, that was a German-English translation of sentences. That is what my uncle learned from and that is what I studied from--Langenscheidt Method--method of learning. It was wonderful. And then I started reading newspapers and so on, and learned the English language--whatever it's worth today.

Then after a couple of years or so, I learned the game enough--I became a kind of a foreman there at the lumber yard--and used to read the tally cards. I knew how to tally lumber and how to multiply; I knew that pretty well at that time.

Then about two or three years afterwards I was sent to British Columbia to ship from a sawmill that belonged to a bunch of English people. And that was in Trout Lake B. C., close to Nelson B. C.
Kleiner: I came there in the wintertime, cold, snow all over. We would wash the snow off with water hoses to get the mill started. And I was to look after the lumber that was being cut, and ship it to the Riverside Lumber Company (our company was known as the Riverside Lumber Company). I shipped it to Calgary and to Edmonton, where they [also] had a lumber yard.

Most of that lumber we shipped there was cedar--cedar siding, cedar lumber of all kinds.

I was more or less in charge of the shipping end of it. There were men in charge of the thing. But I ran the post office, did a lot of things for the people there. I got my room and board. I was there a year, I took sick a couple of times.

After I was in the hospital there in Nelson, I came back to Calgary. I took sick with peritonitis--busted appendix--and I was put on a train for Calgary. When I arrived I was taken to the hospital. I understood they didn't expect me to come out of it. And I had a doctor McKid and a Dr. McClaren who were wonderful physicians. They operated on me and so on, and I was in the hospital I forget how many weeks--draining afterwards. I had a good hospital, good nurses.

And then after I got better and came out, for my year's wages, I got a stock certificate in the Riverside Lumber Company for $1,000. My aunty says, "All you got was this paper? [Laughter] For a whole year's work you got a piece of paper? What kind of work is that?" But anyway that is what I got. Pauline's brother, John, got the same kind of a piece of paper afterwards when he worked in a box factory in Calgary.*

Chall: Was that a typical way of paying off?
Kleiner: No, that was their way of paying off.

* Mrs. Morris Kleiner's (Pauline) brother, John Weinfield. He married H. N. and Rose Sereth's eldest daughter, Sophie.
You were working for H. N.?

I was working for the Riverside Lumber Company; the Riverside Lumber Company was a corporation, you see. H. N. and Alex.

Starting Branch Lumber Yards

That is how they paid me for a year's work. But anyway then I got better; I got better, I got better and better. And then I started looking for lumber yards for the Riverside Lumber Company. On a motor-cycle. So I started a lumber yard in about a half a dozen different cities.

We had, at that time, two lumber yards in Calgary--one in the east end and one in the west end. Then we started a lumber yard in Lethbridge; started a lumberyard in Strathmore; started a lumber yard in Basano; we started a lumber yard in Blackie, that was close to Calgary. And also a lumber yard in Millicent, that is where Leon put in some time--in Millicent near Brooks, Alberta. And I looked after those lumber yards and kept inventory for all of them on a great big piece of paper. A sheet that was made out specially for that.

What was all this lumber being used for? These are all retail outlets--what was going on?

A lot of home building, for farmers, mostly for farmers and contractors. The cities like Calgary, and Edmonton, and Lethbridge--we had contractors who were building houses.

Calgary was just beginning to grow. I wouldn't know it now; at that time it was 15 to 20,000 people. Now it is about 150,000, you see. So those cities all grew. Lethbridge was a mining town, wonderful mining town; Edmonton was always a good city and still is a big city.

But they were growing at that time for what reasons? Were there trains going through? Or were they the county seats of the farm areas?
Kleiner: Well they were developing in every respect. The farmers were all doing well, and they were just growing cities--people coming in from everywhere. Jews moving in from everywhere, also taking up little farms. They worked in the lumber yard. Some people I had working in the lumber yard, they would come there in the morning and daven with their tallis on, right there, between piles of lumber.

Chall: And they were coming from Europe?

Kleiner: They were coming from Europe.

Chall: There was free immigration then to Canada?

Kleiner: That's right.

Chall: The war had started in Canada already?

Kleiner: Well, the war didn't start in Canada yet. The war had started in Europe.

Chall: And these people were fleeing.

Kleiner: Yes, fleeing from Europe. Fleeing into Canada; as many as could get into the United States too.

Chall: Were they coming to do what they had done in Europe, to take up land?

Kleiner: Yes, you see they could get free land; you could get so many acres of land--what they call a homestead--160 acres. They had to live on it, and they had to take care of it. They did very well. You see, the Jews make good farmers. Many of them that came here, they knew enough about that.

The man who was our driver for years and years and years back in the old country, Wasyl, he followed me afterwards to Canada, to Calgary, and he worked for us at the lumber yard there for many, many years. I sent for him because I knew he was a good worker, I had known him for so many years, and my father was not living on the farm anymore. He had a son, Michael, who also married a farmer's daughter and did very well. But his father, Wasyl, died afterwards.
So that was the reason that H. N. could set up all these little lumber yards all over the area. And were they prospering?

Some were and some were not.

Where did he acquire his lumber? Did he have any control over any mills or any forest land?

We had two mills. We had a mill in Michell, B. C. and McGillivray, B. C.

That he owned outright?

Yes, the company owned the two mills. I worked at one mill there for a few months.

After you came back from working for the Englishmen?

Yes, that is between—betwixt and between. And then Leon went up there; that is where he developed his muscles.

So then Leon followed you by a few years into Canada?

Leon followed me by a few years into Canada. That is right.

And he was sent off to work in the mills?

Well, he started working in Calgary. Oh yes, Medicine Hat, did I mention Medicine Hat?

No, you didn't. Was there a lumber yard, retail yard in Medicine Hat?

A beautiful retail yard in Medicine Hat. They had that for—I don't know—three or four years, I think. I lived in Medicine Hat and ran the lumber yard. Leon worked there for a short time. That was a good-sized lumber yard. Calgary was a big one; they had two of them, east end and west end, and a sash and door factory. Then they started a box factory in Calgary.
Chall: What was the box factory supposed to be for?

Kleiner: Making boxes for the different--oh golly--for anybody who needed any boxes.

Chall: Were they heavy?

Kleiner: Yes, heavy wooden boxes.

Chall: Different sizes?

Kleiner: Different sizes; and John, Pauline's brother, after he learned it, was in charge of the box factory. He had been trained as a pharmacist and he had his own drugstores in Montreal before he moved to Calgary.

Chall: Now what kind of equipment was used, any special kind?

Kleiner: They had all kinds of machinery.

Both lumber yards in Calgary--especially the east end one--were busy institutions. Contractors by the dozen were dealing with us there. They were building for sale. Speculation and so on.

Chall: So some of them could pay you and some of them couldn't.

Kleiner: The same old story as it is here.

Chall: My word, it must have been booming.

Kleiner: Well, Calgary was a booming city. Calgary was a booming city.

Chall: In the mills, what kind of machinery were you using then? Electric?

Kleiner: The machinery was practically all electric and steam. Mostly steam, but it was all up-to-the-minute machinery. All good machines.
Kleiner: Most of it came from the United States.

Chall: And you had to set it up there and learn to operate it?

Kleiner: Set it up there. They had a man who knew about the regular sawmill people, got them from some competitors, one place or another.

Chall: What did you do with the sawdust and by-products like that?

Kleiner: Some sawdust was sold and some was dumped like it is dumped here, anyplace that they could find a dump ground for it.

Chall: How did you choose where you were going to put these sawmills; were they near water?

Kleiner: Well, most of them were near ponds where they could get the logs into a pond the same as they did here. And all the logging in Michell and McGillivray was done with horses.

Chall: You didn't do any logging, that wasn't part of your business? You bought logs from the logging companies.

Kleiner: No, they did their own logging.

Chall: You mean H. N. and his brother did logging?

Kleiner: Oh, yes, he was quite a sawmill man. He did his own logging. They had horses, and they had loggers who did the logging and hauled it all to the mill, and cut it into lumber, and the lumber was shipped wherever it was needed. Mostly it went to the retail lumber yards that we had.

The finished product was shipped to the different retail lumber yards we had, and also sold to any other retail lumber yards in the vicinity. There were dozens of retail lumber yards through that part of Canada and we shipped to them also. We shipped by railroad, by the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company mostly--CPR.

As far as the labor force was concerned, we
used to hire through the agencies in Calgary. I would put fifteen or twenty men on a train, pay their railroad fare, and many times lose a third of them or more on the way. At different stations, you see, they would get off, and I would lose them. So by the time I would get to McGillivray or Michell, I only had about half of the men I had paid for. [Laughter]

Is that right? You would pay their fare?

I would pay their transportation. We needed them at the sawmill. I would pay their railroad fare and lose part of them on the way every time. The conductor tried to watch for us, but there was nothing you could do.

What would these men do? They would get off and look for better jobs someplace else?

They would just get off, that's all.

It would be a way to get from Calgary to someplace else?

Yes, that was all. The average age, like any other men, from twenty-five to forty years of age.

And were these also immigrants, many of them, looking for work?

No, most of them were Polish, or some were Canadian. But most of them were more or less of Polish extraction.

Recently coming in, looking for work?

No, they knew enough to get off at the station that they wanted. [Laughter] They were getting paid at that time I guess $2.50 a day. It was a big pay. We had camps built for them—boarding house, rooming house. We had cooks and everything else. They had to be paid well or they wouldn't stay, because it was way out in the wilderness and they had to be looked after properly. They were well fed. They lived in bunk houses; they had to carry their own blankets, their own bedding and so on and that's the way they lived.
Chall: How many did you employ for these sawmills?

Kleiner: Oh, they employed seventy to eighty people at the mill. They were pretty good cutting mills. As far as their relationship with the employer was concerned it was no different than any other. If they had good foremen, they produced. If they didn't have one, they slipped, just the same as they do here now.

Chall: Who picked the foremen? H. N.?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. They were picked by the management. H. N. used to come to the mill at McGillivary, oh about every ten or twelve days and possibly stay for a week or so. Alex was looking after the retail lumber end of it back in Calgary. His specialty was always being busy with the bank. They were always short of money. They always had to borrow money because they over-expanded. So every day he had to go to the bank. I can't remember the name of the bank now, but anyway, every day he was in the bank.

Now we extended afterwards to the extent--I say we, I mean the Riverside Lumber Company--they bought a farm at Cheadle. In Cheadle, they bought a farm and they had about 1500 and some odd acres of land, beautiful land, and they started farming at the same time. They had horses and cattle there and everything else.

Chall: Who did they put on the farm? Just lease it out to somebody?

Kleiner: No, it was worked under their name. It was the Cheadle Farming Company belonging to the Riverside Lumber Company. We hired the foreman and the farm labor.

Effects of World War I on the Riverside Lumber Company

Chall: Why?

Kleiner: Why? Just over-expansion. Anyway their business
Kleiner: got ... let's go back now to the war days. Canada went into the war first. We [U.S.] were not in the war yet. And so H. N. Sereth and I moved to the United States. We went to Tacoma, Seattle, Everett, and Bellingham and started buying lumber there, shipping it to Canada.

The war had taken most of the young generation into the war and the farmers had some of the most wonderful crops that you could think of. They called it stubble crops. They didn't even have to plow the land. They just threw the grain onto the stubble and it came out just beautiful, beautiful crops. And there were no elevators to take care of the situation, so the job H. N. and I had was to buy lumber here and ship it to Canada.

Lumber that was surfaced on one side and one edge was duty-free. Lumber that was shipped and surfaced two sides and two edges was dutiable. As far as the farmer's elevators were concerned, it wouldn't make any difference whether it was surfaced or not surfaced because they just nailed those together for farmer's elevators. They had such terrific crops there that they just did not have room where to put all the grain.

So we shipped lumber from St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company in Tacoma; we shipped lumber from the North Dannaher Lumber Company in Tacoma; we shipped lumber from Everett, from the sawmills there. Then I settled for a while in Bellingham buying lumber from the Blodell-Donovan Lumber Company. Anything and everything that we could get in lumber was shipped to Canada.

Chall: You mean even with all your lumber--the logging and the mills and whatnot, you couldn't supply the lumber in Canada?

Kleiner: That quieted down in Canada in the meantime--the Sereth sawmills there--because they also couldn't get any help there, you see. The men were drafted. They weren't producing very much so we had to close that and ship lumber from other places.

The best results we had were from the Blodell-Donovan Lumber Company in Bellingham. I lived in
Kleiner: Bellingham at the Sinaboy Hotel there for about a year. All the sawmills here were just loaded up with lumber that they hadn't been able to dispose of. It just lay there on the wharves. They were just black, just going to pieces, just rotting away. So we had to arrange for a price on everything and we shipped everything from here to Canada, to Calgary, Alberta, and Edmonton, and other places.

Chall: And your main purpose was for farmer's elevators?

Kleiner: No, farmer's elevators, and also for contractors who were still building houses for people.

Chall: That is pretty shrewd.

Kleiner: Then afterwards, after a year or more in Bellingham, we moved to Tacoma and we started dealing with the Dempsey Lumber Company. That was one of the nicest institutions we ever dealt with. There were three brothers—Neil Dempsey, John Dempsey, and Lawrence Dempsey. Anything that we wanted from those people we could get. Carloads of anything that we wanted: siding, flooring, or anything.

Chall: And what lumber was that, by the way? I just never did ask you about what wood this was.

Kleiner: The lumber here? The lumber here was mostly fir and hemlock. Mostly fir and hemlock. The lumber that we cut in British Columbia ourselves, a lot of it was tamarack. It was as hard as a rock. It wasn't appreciated by the contractors very much.

Chall: These Dempsey's were very helpful?

Kleiner: They were just one of the finest institutions that we dealt with.

Chall: Is that because you could arrive at a price and get what you wanted cheap?

Kleiner: They would cut anything that we wanted. So we settled here. I rented an apartment across from Rhodes Brothers. It used to be a little theater across the street. It had apartments in part of it,
Kleiner: so I rented a three-room apartment there. One was an office, and one was a bedroom for me, and one was a bedroom for H. N. Sereth.

By that time the Riverside Lumber Company in Canada was slipping. They were losing money and going down hill very rapidly. So the name was changed, under a new set up, to Southern Alberta Lumber Company. And we shipped lumber from the Dempsey mill under the name of Southern Alberta Lumber Company.

Chall: Was that to get around laws, or to make it look better?

Kleiner: Well, it was going into--not bankruptcy, but getting pretty close to it. They were losing money like everything.

Chall: But this activity of shipping lumber from the United States to Canada for the farmers and the other contractors--was that making money?

Kleiner: That was making money. Except that they were behind their payments to the bank.

The Cheadle farm in the meantime was lost to the mortgage company. I made one trip from here, there, when the trouble was on. Because I didn't have very much money myself; I just had a little money accumulated from wages that I was earning. I could not help them out. And H. N. didn't have any more money and Alex was in Calgary.

Chall: How long were you working for H. N. for the Riverside Lumber Company--all that major enterprise that just seemed to be bursting. How long did that last?

Kleiner: Well, that lasted quite a few years. When I landed in Calgary, they were in business. They had organized the Riverside Lumber Company and had been in business for some years. Because H. N. came here first--long before I did--with his wife and the girls, you see.

Chall: They hadn't over-expanded until later?

Kleiner: No, no, they were going slow at that time, they
Kleiner: expanded afterwards.

Chall: If they hadn't become extended?

Kleiner: Most of the money was lost in Minnesota Transfer. A lot of the lumber that we bought and shipped went to Minnesota Transfer. The idea was that you ship lumber there hoping that somebody will want it badly. But we had to pay freight to Minnesota Transfer; we had to pay demurage. The lumber stood on the tracks many days, weeks or months. The war was on, men were being drafted, the lumber business just went to pieces, slowly, you see.

So they shipped the lumber that they bought from Dempsey and many others to the Minnesota Transfer. And after paying freight and demurage on those cars--prices of lumber dropped in the meantime. Then they were at the mercy of any buyer who wanted lumber, practically set their own price on it, you see. [Trying to recollect other aspects of the problem at that time.] The whole thing just went to pieces.

Chall: That must have been really sort of sad.

Kleiner: Yes, things went to pieces in a hurry. So in the meantime, as I said, Alex started a small lumber yard for himself in Vancouver, B. C.--the Sereth Lumber Company--in 1919. A small lumber yard. And he slowly developed into an institution. He bought some timber, had an option on some timber lands in British Columbia, and he slowly developed into a sawmill, and he did a big business there. H. N. wasn't in on it. You see that was all his own doings. And he developed a terrific business there.

His oldest son, George, until his death, worked in the office. Arthur was looking after the logging camps, and Alex was looking after the sawmills. They had two sawmills. Helen Pepis Olfman, whose mother was Sosia Sereth's sister, worked for many years as office manager, so had her mother. After Alex's death, and the sale of the business, she received a share of the estate along with Arthur and his sister Ruby Sereth Goldberg.* Of the Goldberg furniture business in Aberdeen and Hoquiam,

*Alex Sereth died in 1954.
Kleiner: Washington. Not many years ago, practically as the bottom was dropping out of everything, they sold it to a big institution for a little over four million dollars.

Chall: Alex did well for himself—I mean he went off by himself and just went right into the same business in a new location.

Kleiner: He did very well, but his brother wasn't in on it.

Chall: Now in the meantime what happened to H. N.? Did he ever really get back in full control of a lumber business?

Kleiner: H. N. was absolutely finished. Absolutely finished. He started reading a lot, and he was all alone there after his wife died [1936]. He and my aunt lived for years in Seattle, and so did his daughters Clara and Stella.

Chall: But that was in his older days. When you had started business here he was still a relatively young man. But he never went back into business? Or did he try?

Kleiner: Well, he was not young exactly. Oh, no, he never went back into business because he was like a licked pup, especially when his brother started for himself there. He would send him $25 a week or something. Out of five daughters we only have two now remaining; three died. One [Cecile] lives in Toronto and one [Stella]* is in Seattle. [Cecile died in April, 1974 at the age of 81.]

Further Analysis of the Lumber Business in Calgary

Chall: Was there much competition for the Riverside Lumber Company in Canada?

Kleiner: There were a lot of retail lumber yards in Alberta and Saskatchewan in those days, but Riverside Lumber Company was in a good location and through advertising efforts and so on they did their share of business and possibly more than their share of business in Calgary.

*In 1918, H. N., Rose, and their two youngest daughters, Clara and Stella, moved to Seattle where he carried on his business. The war, the inflation of the late twenties, a blizzard at Cheadle, and a
Chall: Were there trade associations and things of that sort, at that time, that you belonged to?

Kleiner: The retail fellows used to get together, more or less agreed on a price to go by, by giving their contractors a discount retail price, the same as is done everyplace else.

The discount was anywhere from 10 to 15 percent to the contractors depending on how much they were buying--how big a contractor they were.

Chall: So there was a restraint of trade, sort of?

Kleiner: No, there wasn't. They weren't exactly the same price, but more or less, they agreed on certain procedures.

Chall: When the Riverside Lumber Company had its timber land, did it have to purchase the logging area from the government? How did that work?

Kleiner: The timber belonged to the Canadian government. And they were cutting the timber at so much a square foot, or rather so much per some standard of measurement--I forget what it was called.

Chall: Did the Canadian government have regulations about how it could be cut?

Kleiner: No, they had no regulations how it could be cut; it could be cut into any kind of lumber that was needed in the retail yards.

Chall: But what about cutting out the logs? You were allowed to go into the forest and log the trees down?

Kleiner: Yes, they had men and horses in those days, and machinery to do the logging with, but most of it was done by horse and by hand work and so on.

Chall: And were you allowed just to go through an area and cut one tree after another without any consideration?

Kleiner: That was the system in those days. You just took typhoon in Florida which destroyed ships carrying lumber consigned to the company, brought an end to the enterprise by about 1930.
Kleiner: everything that looked suitable for the sawmill.

Chall: So there was no regulation of logging?

Kleiner: There was no regulation at that time.

Chall: And then you sent it down the ponds, or the river?

Kleiner: Yes, they brought it into the pond adjoining the mill, and to the mill to cut into lumber.

Chall: Those pictures of Uncle Leon's of the work crews in the mills at White Sulphur, B. C. show a number of Hindus. Were they common in the labor force?

Kleiner: The Hindus were used in the mills and logging camps around Calgary. They were a common sight in Alberta and British Columbia. They were Sikhs from Hindustan and were brought from India by the unions for labor in the mills. They landed in Nelson, B. C., and then fanned out into Canada wherever they could find work.

They didn't speak English, so they always worked, as contract labor, with a foreman. He spoke English and could translate instructions to them. As a group, with their foreman, they would stay in one place for a long time.

They didn't eat meat and they didn't speak English, so they lived by themselves in their own bunkhouses and cooked their own meals. They never shaved or cut their hair, always wore their turbans. They never married.

Eventually some of them learned the business so well that they established sawmills of their own in Vancouver, and actually competed with Alex Sereth's business.

Chall: How did the Sereths finance all this—the machinery for the mills and the logging operation?

Kleiner: We used to deal with one particular bank in Calgary who financed the whole thing. But they were always short of money. Alex Sereth used to make a trip to the bank every day; every morning he had to be in the bank.
Chall: Were they operating a bigger organization than the others in the business, your competitors? Were others reaching from the forest to the home building the same way?

Kleiner: Most of them acted about the same way. And there was very little competition. There were not very many mills through British Columbia in those days.

Chall: Through Alberta?

Kleiner: British Columbia was where the mill was. Michell, B. C.

Chall: I was just wondering because they were stretched so far, their finances were stretched to the ultimate limit.

Kleiner: They always were, they always were stretched.

Chall: Was that their way of doing business, or was everybody doing business in that way?

Kleiner: That was their way of doing business.

Chall: So that they weren't able to take any kind of a crisis too easily.

Kleiner: They were a little over extended at all times. They had too many yards, and when collections got tough . . . They used to sell to farmers, what was known as crop payments. If they had a good crop, they paid their bills; if they didn't have a good crop, they were just up against it. You couldn't collect and you had to wait for another year--possibly they will get another crop. And a lot of the money was lost in crop payments. The farmers didn't make it many, many years.

We used to get a lot of snow and also cold in the wintertime; we used to get fifty to sixty below zero many, many winters. And then you had drought and then the wheat and everything was gone before harvest and nothing could be done. It was just a loss right from the beginning to the end. So they suffered many times through loss to harvest.

Chall: And most of their business was with farmers.
Kleiner: Most with farmers and contractors in the city, but a lot of it was to farming communities. And all those retail yards, were all more or less in farming communities because Alberta was a farmer's prairie. And many people depended on farmers, and the one-day-a-week market that they used to bring to Calgary and other cities.

Chall: And they used to store the grain from one season to the next in elevators for which you provided lumber.

Kleiner: Farmer's elevators. They were in the cities, they were not on the farms.

Chall: How did you get paid? I figured out you had been working for them about ten years. How in all those years were you paid?

Kleiner: I was paid a monthly wage. When I first started with them, I used to get a dollar a day—work about ten to twelve hours for a dollar a day. But then when I became foreman already, $100 a month was a lot of money. Our lumber yard was right adjoining the Riverside Hotel which was owned by a German family and they served meals there very reasonably. I used to get lunch there for 25¢ and apple pie, and pudding as a dessert. All I remember is "apple pie and pudding, please." [Laughter]

Chall: That is all you could say for a long time! So that is where you ate lunch?

Kleiner: Yes, and I lived with my aunt at that time.

Chall: Rose?


Chall: So how many years did you live there with them?

Kleiner: Oh, possibly two years.

Living in Small Canadian Towns

Chall: And then where did you live?
When I was in Edmonton, I lived in an apartment. When I was in Medicine Hat, I had an apartment built onto the lumber yard. And when I was in British Columbia at the mill owned by the English people, I had a little cottage. I ate with a Scandinavian family adjoining, by the name of Godell. They were very, very fine people. She was a very good Scandinavian cook.

Now, if you moved around all that time how did you find your friends? What was your life like in these little communities?

Well, in Medicine Hat I had a lot of friends. A lot of people I was friendly with. In the sawmill naturally, I just led a quieter life. There was no radio, no television in those days. The minister used to come in once every two weeks to hold services for the people who worked in the mill, and the cottage I had was the biggest one in the group. They used to hold services right in my cottage. He used to make a collection right there.

Now in the other communities in Alberta, was there any kind of a Jewish life, if there were so many immigrants coming into the area?

Well, in Calgary they had a synagogue and a rabbi.

Full time there?

Yes. And I don't know whether I went to services once or twice in all the time I was there, but anyway the place was there for you.

What about the rest of the family--the girls--did they participate in any of that?

Not very much, no.

And were there other immigrants--Polish and German-speaking people who moved into the area whom you mixed with?

I didn't mix with them exactly--they had their own life to lead. I naturally mixed with some of the people who lived there before, who were friends of
Kleiner: the Sereth's long before I came there.

Chall: So what was basically the social life, if there was any, in Calgary?

Kleiner: In Calgary they played cards, they had dances, and moving picture theaters. The Allen family had theaters in Calgary, Edmonton, and many other places. One of the Allens married my cousin Cecile, who now lives in Toronto.

Chall: That is how Cecile met Harry Allen?

Kleiner: That is right, Harry Allen. And for some time we lived with Mrs. Allen. I lived there and also Mr. Moe Lieberman, who is an attorney in Edmonton, Canada, who married my cousin Emily.

Chall: Were the Liebermans immigrants to Canada?

Kleiner: Well his folks did not live in Calgary or Edmonton. His folks lived in the East of the United States. And he took up engineering and surveying and that is what he worked on in Calgary. And he studied law at the same time. He is a very well-known attorney in Edmonton and his son, Samuel, is a judge in Edmonton at the present time.

Chall: And the Allens, where did they come from?

Kleiner: I don't know. They were in Calgary when I got there.

Chall: Can you remember what it was like getting used to the change of culture and language when you went to Canada?

Kleiner: Well, it didn't take me very long. I was young enough then and went to night school. I spoke Polish, naturally, with the girls at home and with the Sereths until I learned English enough to be able to converse with them. I studied every night and I read a lot of papers, and Langenscheidt Method that I mentioned before was very good--English and German. And once I started working with some people who spoke English, it didn't take me long to get more or less into a normal way of life.
Chall: Were you ever homesick to return to Poland? Apprehensive about this great change in your life?

Kleiner: No. Once I came over I never intended to go back. I was never homesick.

Chall: The only person then before the First World War who came over was Leon--from your family. Anybody else?

Kleiner: Leon came first. And then after the First World War, my oldest brother, Simon came.

Chall: But he came directly to Tacoma, not through Canada.

Kleiner: He came directly to Tacoma. And he also worked in the lumber yard with us. And then after he learned English enough, I bought a little confectionary store for him and he stayed in that business for many, many years, selling one store, starting another one and so on. He retired some years afterwards, bought a duplex apartment, lived in one part of it, and rented the downstairs. He got along the best way he could, did his own cooking and housekeeping.

Chall: He left a family didn't he when he came?

Kleiner: He left his wife and son, who is now a teacher in Warsaw, Poland.

World War I Wipes Out Family's Farms in Poland

Chall: Was his farm wiped out by the First World War?

Kleiner: His farm and my father's farm were wiped out completely--left them practically naked. And then my father and a whole group of people, including my sister, who was just possibly twelve years old at the time, they just travelled with horses and wagons from one village to another and settled eventually before the war finished.*

*For additional material on father and sister Toncia, see Appendix.
Kleiner: He was completely wiped out.

The Russians came into Tarnopol. Most of the fighting was done in Tarnopol, which was the city where we were practically brought up. We went to school there and so on. The Russians took everything that they could lay their hands on—the horses, cattle, and everything else that they could. So that left Simon, and my father—the whole family, and all people who were in that same line of work, penniless.

Chall: So he never farmed after the First World War?

Kleiner: No, no. He was through farming. There was no more farming.

Chall: How did he live?

Kleiner: We used to send him money from here, to live on. And he saved some money out of that and he got by very nicely with his wife and daughter.

Chall: By this time there was only one boy left in Poland—Bunio.

Kleiner: Yes, he got married and he had a drug store in Warsaw. He had a daughter, who was just teenage or less, and they were out swimming one Sunday afternoon, and she was drowning. So he saved her life, but drowned himself.

Chall: That was about 1939 or 1940 I think.

Kleiner: Just about.

Chall: I think he was about ready to come to this country on a visit.*

*His wife and daughter were killed in a concentration camp during World War II.
III  SIXTY YEARS IN THE LUMBER BUSINESS IN TACOMA, WASHINGTON

Starting the Liberty Lumber Company--1914

Chall: How did you get started in Tacoma?

Kleiner: While I was still buying lumber for the Southern Alberta Lumber Company--the Riverside Lumber Company--there was a wood yard for sale on South 41st and M Street in Tacoma--a kind of a wood and lumber yard belonging to St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company. So I thought that would be a good place for me. So I spoke to the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company and they wanted to dispose of the property badly. So I bought it at a price that was more or less reasonable. I paid, I forget, about $1,000 to $1,200 down and the balance in monthly installments.

I was doing business with Dempsey for myself, and they would do anything for me; they were just wonderful people, and anything I wanted, money or no money, I could have it. Especially John Dempsey, who has now passed away. So I used to haul wood from there in great big trucks, trucks that were made specially to haul wood to us at the Liberty Lumber Company on South 41st and M.

Chall: Wood, what was the wood?

Kleiner: Fuel. And I bought two teams of horses from the Kenworthy Grain Company. I bought their wagons and two teams of horses. I took the driver along with one of the teams because one was an awfully kicky horse and this fellow seemed to know how to handle them. I couldn't and I was used to horses.
Kleiner: from home. And I used to drive one team myself and the other fellow drove the other team. We used to deliver wood and lumber in the city, south end, mostly.

Chall: Did people come to you to order it—a retail business?

Kleiner: Yes, they used to order it over the telephone. I had a woman working for me in the office.

Chall: And you delivered it?

Kleiner: And I would deliver it with one team and the other fellow would deliver it with the other team.

Chall: What kind of lumber did you have?

Kleiner: Well, nearly everything; 2 x 4s, 2 x 6s, anything and everything to build a house. We slowly developed quite a business there with contractors and so on. We used to carry, what was in that time, $35,000 to $50,000 worth of stock on hand, which is today, $150 to $200,000. And we had a good contractor trade, contractor business, and watching the credits, we did very well.

Chall: How did you finance that down payment? Did you have that money yourself or did you have to borrow it?

Kleiner: I had that money myself. And I also bought, as I told you, two teams of horses from the grain company.

Chall: And did you have the money for that too?

Kleiner: That was bought on payments; the teams and the wagons were bought on payments. So much a month. And I started in the wood business, and also through the acquaintance with the Dempsey mill at that time, I put in some stock of lumber and built a small shed to take care of it. There was a wood shed there from the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company. And since they knew me from dealing with Dempsey's, there was no difficulty to get what I wanted from them.
Kleiner: As a matter of fact I used to bring wood, about twenty cords to a load, with horses to the yard. Then we had a railroad track or a streetcar track cut through into the lumber yard, and wood and lumber then we used to bring in on the streetcars. That was different days.

Chall: You mean you could actually have it routed into your yard?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. They just backed right in.

Chall: I remember the yard and I remember the tracks, but I never remembered the streetcar.

Kleiner: Yes, they used to bring cars right into the yard. Oh, yes. St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company loaded the wood cars and Tacoma Railway and Power Company brought the streetcar into the yard.

Chall: With much of this business it was a gentleman's agreement on payments. No banks.

Kleiner: That's right. They all treated me very nicely. Leon was with me at that time too. There wasn't any partnership, he just worked for me. You have seen some of his pictures.

Chall: Leon's pictures?

Kleiner: Leon's pictures, in front of the lumber yard. I think I gave some to Herman.

Chall: Then you went into Shelton and Olympia and South Tacoma?

Kleiner: That was the year after.

Chall: But you didn't have to finance that through a bank?

Kleiner: No, I had made some money. I had made some money and I had quite a stock of lumber already then from the Dempsey mill mostly and started a lumber yard in Shelton, and Olympia--which didn't last very long. And the yard in South Tacoma, we used that mostly as a storage yard; and a retail yard under the name of Service Lumber Company in South Tacoma. I had a man looking after it there.
Chall: Did the experience that you had with the Riverside Lumber, seeing the way they had overextended the operation, and then failed when there was just the slightest crisis--did that ever cause you to watch how you expanded your operation?

Kleiner: Well, it must have because I never extended any more than I could make. I had trouble here at one time. I was also building houses in Tacoma and we used to do business with a Scandinavian-American bank which was kind of a cooperative proposition. I lived on South 40th and M at that time and I got up one cold morning on Sunday to get the paper off the porch and the headlines said Scandinavian-American Bank Fails and Closed its Doors. So that tied up whatever money I had there and also checks that I issued Saturday to carpenters who were building the houses for me, on East 46th Street.

Chall: They couldn't get their pay either.

Kleiner: They couldn't get paid. So I was up against it. And I went to the National Bank of Washington, on Monday, to see if I could borrow some money and, "I will let you know tomorrow, come back." I gave them the names of the people I did business with here--the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company, and Dempsey Lumber Company, and others--S. C. Barlow and Company who were in the concrete business. "I will let you know tomorrow." So I thought, "Gol dan it, I've got to know now." So I went to the Puget Sound Bank and asked them for the same thing. Well the same thing, "I will let you know tomorrow."

Then I heard within that time, or shortly, that the two of them happened to meet and they said (naturally, I wasn't the only one up against it), that Kleiner from the Liberty Lumber Company was in to see me, and "he was in to see me too." I didn't know at that time that I started kind of a--that I had no business going to two banks and asking for money.

So I explained that to the Puget Sound Bank and they gave me a personal loan to see me through,
Kleiner: to pay off the men and get a little money ahead. I have dealt with the Puget Sound Bank all of these years, and that is why. I have borrowed money from the Puget Sound Bank when I started the yard in Shelton and so on, and I paid everything off and I didn't owe any of the banks any money for many, many years back.

So this is how I started in business at the Liberty Lumber Company at South 41st and M. We employed there about six or eight people. We started paying $5 a day which was a big, big, big wage. I was about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age then and I have some pictures which were taken in 1916.

Marriage

Kleiner: And then I got married--into the family so to speak--in Calgary to John Weinfield's sister, Pauline [October 7, 1919]. So when we first got married we had a building on South 41st and M. The downstairs part was the barn where we had the four horses. The second floor was the offices that we had and a bathroom. And the upstairs, we had bedrooms. My wife and I lived in it for a couple of years or so.

Chall: A kitchen too?
Kleiner: Oh, yes. The whole thing.
Chall: It was an apartment.
Kleiner: We were on top. The office next and the horses below us.
Chall: And the lumber yard was attached?
Kleiner: Yes, the lumber yard was--you never saw it.
Chall: Yes, I saw the old place.
Kleiner: Well, that is what was happening there. Then we
Kleiner: built a house, just a block away from the lumber yard, a small house, which was very comfortable. Then we had one or two kids coming one after another, so we built another house. We built three houses on that street and moved from one to another. And then afterwards [1927], we bought the house on 1508 North 6th. An old house, that we remodelled into three bedrooms and bathrooms, where we lived until we built this house in 1950 [620 Carr].

Chall: How did you pick the name Liberty Lumber?

Kleiner: From Liberty War Bonds.

Expanding the Business

Kleiner: The Liberty Lumber Company made us a good living. At that time I started other lumber yards. I had a lumber yard on South 41st and M. I had a lumber yard in South Tacoma, and I had a lumber yard in Shelton, and a lumber yard in Olympia.

Chall: Now, these were all retail outlets?

Kleiner: All retail outlets.

Chall: And what was making it so good to have retail outlets in all these little towns?

Kleiner: Shelton was a growing community and business was pretty good there. In Olympia we started out there near the waterfront and Leon ran that for a while; but it wasn't too successful so we closed that up, and kept the lumber yard in Shelton for quite a while, until it got to the point where the man who was running it for me thought he would buy it and I was foolish to sell it. The one in South Tacoma— we used that for a warehouse for a long time. We used to buy lumber pretty cheap in those days and store it there, and from there we shipped it to different places.

Chall: What was building up so much in Shelton?
Kleiner: Shelton was a new community there. That was near Olympia. They had a lot of waterfront there, all around, lakes and so on. People were just building cottages and so on through that territory.

Chall: Where did you get your lumber then? You didn't own sawmills.

Kleiner: We shipped all the lumber from here. We used to buy it from the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company, and from the Dempsey Lumber Company and haul it by truck. Oh yes, after the teams of horses, I bought a little truck, and then afterwards we bought a big truck, a Clydsdale truck, big one. We used to haul anywhere--3, 4, 5,000 feet of lumber on it from Tacoma to Shelton. We used to make a trip a day.

Chall: And you had drivers by that time. You didn't do that.

Kleiner: Oh, yes. I had drivers by that time.

Chall: So you never operated your own sawmills. You didn't do any of the kind of thing that H. N. had done.

Kleiner: That is right, I had no sawmills. I knew nothing about sawmills. Except for what I had seen in British Columbia when I was in the mill there.

Chall: You never felt that you needed to, because you had good relationships with the mills here?

Kleiner: No, I was always afraid of machinery. As a matter of fact, I was going to start a millwork plant on South 41st and M. I had all the machinery bought, had the building next door to put it into, and the neighbors started complaining they didn't want any machinery noise. So I sold all the machines to the Independent Lumber Company [now Gray Lumber Company], on South 39th and M, and all we had left was just a cut-off saw, and that is all.

Chall: So from then on, it was just retail.

Kleiner: Just retail.
Petition. Volume 23. Number 2404

Description of holder: Age 36 years, height 5 feet 6 inches, color: white, complexion: medium. Color of eyes: hazel; color of hair: black; visible distinguishing marks: none.

Name, age, and place of residence of wife: Maria, age 5 years, 7 months; Herman, age 4 years, 6 months; Josephine Isabel, age 2 years, 4 months. All reside in Tacoma.

By the Court:

Moritz Kleiner

Residing at number

1608 North 6th Street

City of Tacoma

State of Washington

Petitioner, having applied, has been admitted as a citizen of the United States of America, pursuant to law, and also February term of the Court of Naturalization of the United States of America, held at the 23rd day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and twenty-six, the court having found that the petitioner had resided continuously within the United States for at least five years, and in the territory for at least one year immediately preceding the date of the filing of his petition, and that said petitioner intends to reside permanently in the United States, has in all respects complied with the law in relation thereto, and that he was entitled to be so admitted, it was therefore ordered by the said court that he be admitted as a citizen of the United States of America.

In testimony whereof the seal of said court is hereunto affixed, on the 26th day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and twenty-six, and of our Independence the one hundred and fiftyfifth.

Note: Under act of September 22, 1922, husband's naturalization does not make wife a citizen.

(Official character of attester)
Chall: All experience that you had previously with Riverside was important to you.

Kleiner: Oh, sure. That is where I learned. Without the Riverside Lumber Company, I would never have gotten as far as I had. Because all the experience that I had, in the retail business was from the Riverside Lumber Company in Calgary and all the other lumber yards that I started myself for them.

Chall: And what about your father's admonition to own land? You decided that was not for you?

Kleiner: To own land. He was right. I bought the land on South Tacoma Way and sold it dirt cheap--this land near the Saxton Lumber, now it is Saxton Furniture. I sold it cheaply because somebody else wanted it worse than I did.

Chall: Was that your South Tacoma lumber yard there?

Kleiner: This was on South Tacoma Way. The lumber yard was on Union Avenue.

Chall: So you did buy land.

Kleiner: I did buy land. But I usually sold it. I bought land where the Model Lumber yard is now, where the Liberty Lumber Company was. And that is how it developed and that is how the younger generation now is starting a new lumber yard out on Highway 99. That is where the younger generation learned the business [Herman Kleiner, Morris's son].

Establishing the Model Lumber Company, 1929

Chall: So from about 1916 to about 1929, you were in the Liberty Lumber on South 41st and M--that was the main lumber yard. Then was it 1929 that you moved to the Model, or you set up the Model Lumber Company?

Kleiner: About 1926 I bought a piece of property on Bay Street, with the idea of starting a lumber yard there, and
Kleiner: then in 1929 started a lumber yard under the name of Model Lumber Company [2424 Bay]. I ran both yards for some years. During the war [World War II] due to a shortage of housing I rebuilt the store and offices on M Street into apartments. And I slowly closed the Liberty Lumber Company and put up some buildings on Bay Street.

Chall: What made you decide to put up a lumber yard on Bay Street? This was getting into the years of the Depression. To start at that time, one would think, risky.

Kleiner: Well, I had a fairly good inventory at South 41st and M Street. And I had a little money in the bank. The place on M Street got a little too small, so I thought, better start something bigger and the Model Lumber Company was large enough for that purpose. I put up one building, and then another, and another, until it expanded into a half million dollar-a-year business.

Chall: And you never had any trouble with the business, I mean it always was a good business.

Kleiner: Always; it always made a living. When we had to live on $25 a week, we lived on $25 a week. And as conditions got better we spent more money. We were never up against it at any one time.

Chall: That was a good business down there; that was a good location for it?

Kleiner: Good location and good parking facilities and so on.

Chall: Now with the financing of the Model that would have required a bank.

Kleiner: Yes, the same Puget Sound Bank helped whenever I needed anything. All I had to do was sign a note.

Business and Employment Practices

Chall: How about your employees in both businesses. Where
Chall: did they come from basically? How did you find them in the earliest days, those good men who stayed with you for so many years?

Kleiner: Well, at the Liberty Lumber Company we had the yard foreman, and the truck driver who stayed with us for many, many years. The yard foreman was with me over twenty years. When we closed the Liberty Lumber Company, he came down and worked at Model Lumber Company. Then he retired, and I had a foreman who worked under him, who became foreman afterwards at the Model Lumber Company. I've had people work for many, many years. There were not many changes. They were well-treated, and paid as well or better than they could get any other place.

Chall: Over the years have you felt any employee-employer relations gap?

Kleiner: There was no employee-employer gap. We have ten to twelve people working for us and they are just like one family. We know when their birthdays are, when their family anniversaries are; and for their birthdays we generally have a cake for them at the office, with best wishes and so on. At Christmas time we do the same thing and we generally give them a bonus in their checks at the end of the year. So we have had absolutely no bad feelings with any of our group of employees.

Chall: You haven't really changed your ways of dealing with your employees over the years? It has been about the same.

Kleiner: It has been about the same. There were no differences. As a matter of fact most of them naturally call my son by his first name; the majority of them call me by my first name, which I would rather have them do than call me Mr.

Chall: Well, I remember Mr. Vaughan [Burt]--Didn't Vaughan always call you Mr. Kleiner?

Kleiner: Yes, and he still does. Burt Vaughan was with me some twenty-five years. We started him later in his own business by helping him lease Leon's lumber yard [Pacific Ave. Lumber Company on 84th and Pacific]
when Leon retired. Then he changed the name to Vaughan's Pacific Ave. Lumber Company. He operated the yard with his son Ted for nearly eighteen to twenty years, at which time the lease ran out. Then he bought a lumber yard on South Tacoma Way--the former Chambers Creek Company. He is now retired and his son has the business.

[added in 1974] Vaughan felt so attached to the Kleiners that when the Yom Kippur war broke out in October, 1973 he came into the yard and gave Herman a check for $500 made out to the Israel Emergency Fund.

And Mr. Gummere. What did he call you?

Always Morris.

What about the thirties with the coming in of the unions and the labor strikes? Did that make much difference in your business?

Well, we had one strike of employees of all retail lumber yards. The place was closed for about two weeks till the wage situation was settled on the same basis as Seattle settled with their employees in the retail lumber business. But we never had any trouble after that.

Was that the Teamsters?

That was the Teamsters. Naturally all the yard men, yard crew walked out at the same time. Cavanaugh's people used to picket me and our men used to picket Cavanaugh Lumber Company.

And then for a while you were building model homes. Were you building just the homes that were what you call model that were out in the front, or were you building other homes?

We built two-bedroom homes for $2,600. Fireplace, kitchen and all for $2,600.

Those were built to order though. Were you building any houses on speculation?

We were building some--buy the lots and build them.
Kleiner: And some were built for people on their property for that much money, for $2,600. Since then nearly all of those homes have sold for $12 to $15,000.

Chall: You employed an architect, who worked at the lumber yard.

Kleiner: We had an architect and a draftsman.

Chall: And was that a unique approach for a retail lumber yard in the city? Were many of them doing that?

Kleiner: Well, I think we were possibly the only one at that time who started that. We also started what was known as the tepee business, tepee houses [A-frame]. They were supposedly like an Indian tepee. They were built about 16 x 24 feet in size with room upstairs. And they were very good items and quite a few sold in those days. We had a display of the homes and also the tepee in front of our yard.

Chall: And those were sold primarily for country and mountain cabins and things of that nature?

Kleiner: That is right.

Chall: So they were built up in the mountains around here.

Kleiner: They were built around the mountains and the lakes.

Chall: What else did you do that was different?

Kleiner: Nothing that I know of.

**Training Relatives, Refugees**

Chall: During the late thirties the grandsons of H. N. Sereth, who had trained you in the lumber business when you came over from Europe, were brought by you to this country to be trained in the lumber business. They weren't able to get a footing in Calgary, because of the Depression. As I recall the two oldest of the four sons of Sophie and John Weinfield came at different times and spent about a year or so here, learning the lumber business. First
Chall: Jack and then Irwin.

Kleiner: Yes, and they have both become very successful in the lumber business. Jack eventually settled in Montreal. He rented a building near a railroad track and bought lumber and shipped it to Montreal. He developed through the years a very, very good business. No deliveries, just contractors and merchants buying direct from him. He has done exceptionally well. He has done better than any other yard in Montreal. For a one-man concern.

Chall: And Irwin?

Kleiner: Irwin learned something about the business from me, and then he went back to Vancouver and worked for a while with the Sereths. Then he slowly developed a wholesale business in Portland where he has settled.

Joe [Weinfield] worked for the Sereths in Vancouver and learned the logging end of the business, and he learned about log lifts and went into manufacturing lifts and did very well.

Chall: During the late thirties and well into the forties, I remember German refugees came into Tacoma whom you helped. I can even remember some letters addressed simply Morris Kleiner, Tacoma.

Kleiner: Yes, they were from people who wanted to come to the United States after the war with Hitler.

Chall: You put some of them to work in the lumber yard, although not as trainees, necessarily.

Kleiner: Well, one young fellow came in, before his parents. His parents were in the lumber business in Germany in the town of Kassel.

So when Fritz [Loewenstein] came to Seattle, since his father was in the lumber business, he found out that H. N. Sereth was a lumber man, so he went to see him, and H. N. Sereth called me and wanted to know would I talk to the young fellow. He was looking for lumber yard work. So I had him come in. He seemed like a nice young kid and I put him to work. He worked for me for quite a few years.
Kleiner: His parents [Louis and Johanna] and a younger brother [Walter] also came to Tacoma shortly after Fritz arrived. The father started looking for a job which was awfully hard to find in those days. He wanted to do something. He was not used to actual labor in the lumber business, but he had to have something to do, so he found jobs that were not suited exactly. But he worked at it until he got a job with the Columbia Brewing Company. And he worked himself up to a foreman. He worked with the company for many, many years until his retirement.

Fritz, after trying a couple of other kinds of businesses, went to California and got a job with a paint and floor covering institution [Standard Brands Paint Company] and he has worked for them for the last thirteen years. He started about eight to ten outlets for them in many places in Oregon, Washington, and California.

The younger brother Walter graduated from the University of Washington and is now one of the country's top young physicists. He recently moved from Chicago to Palo Alto.

Chall: Other refugees I recall, including relatives, you always gave employment, until they could find something more suitable.*

Kleiner: Yes.

The Lumber Business in Tacoma Through the Years

Chall: What was the lumber business like in Tacoma during the years 1916 to about 1950?

Kleiner: Tacoma was known at one time as the lumber capital of the world. We had a lot of sawmills here and a lot of lumber yards. Most of the sawmills went out

*Appendix.
Kleiner: of business with the exception of three or four that are still remaining. The plywood business developed in the meantime and a lot of plywood plants started out, some cooperatively, some owned by the mills. And possibly a half a dozen retail lumber yards went out of business in Tacoma during the Depression. I think I bought most of what was left of the inventory when they closed up.

So with the exception of one lumber yard in Tacoma—the Independent Lumber Company—Liberty and the Model Lumber Companies were the oldest lumber yards in Tacoma dating back fifty some years.

Chall: Is Cavanaugh a recent lumber business?

Kleiner: Cavanaugh was started about the same time we started the Model Lumber Company.

Chall: Is the Independent still in existence?

Kleiner: The Independent is still in existence on 39th and M, and also on Sixth Avenue. We used to be on 41st and M and he was already in business on 39th and M.

Chall: What was the retail lumber business like when you first started?

Kleiner: There were oh, possibly, a half a dozen other retail yards in lumber at that time.

Chall: And were they all operating that same way, just the way you set up your Liberty Lumber Company?

Kleiner: The only large retail lumber yard was one connected with the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company. They ran their own retail lumber yard and then afterwards they sold out the business to what was known as John Dower Lumber Company. The John Dower Lumber Company came from the East. They were supposedly one of the best retail lumber merchants in the country, but after eight years or so, they also went out of business. The St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company took the yard over again and ran it themselves. Right now they are one of the biggest retail lumber yards in Tacoma and vicinity.
St. Paul is still running a lumber yard?

That is right. It is under the name of the St. Regis Lumber Company now, but still, it is St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company.

Did St. Regis Pulp and Paper buy them out?

St. Regis Pulp and Paper, yes.

Have there been many mergers of that kind taking over?

No, there haven't been. Not here that we know of.

So you managed to stay in business and others fell by the wayside. Do you have any ideas why?

Well, they just weren't run properly. I don't know that I was any smarter than the others, I don't know. Just a different way of doing business, buying differently than they did, not just the 2 x 4s and shiplap. Other commodities that were not handled by other retail lumber yards.

Like what?

We went into hardware in a bigger way, and paint, and hardwood lumber, and many commodities that the retail lumber yards did not handle.

Why did you decide to try it that way?

Well, we had a clientele of people who asked for things as they do now. They would say, "By golly, I was all over town and I couldn't find it anywhere. Then I came down to the Model." I said, "That is no compliment, you should have come down here first!" [Laughter] But we carried things that other people did not carry.

Now what about advertising, and the merchant's association in the very early years when there may have been a half a dozen lumber yards?

We had a retail lumber association, we'd get together and discuss the building situation and so on. We had a Tacoma Lumberman's Club, we used to
Kleiner: meet once a week for lunch in Tacoma. I've been a member of Tacoma Lumberman's Club for many years. The Western Regional Lumberman's Association presented me an award, forty-year club membership in 1961.

Chall: So you joined very shortly after you came to town.

Kleiner: Yes, when I started in business. That is fifty-eight years ago. [Reading] "Recognition and sincere appreciation of forty years of service to our industry and its high purposes, the building of a better America through better homes."

Chall: That group was meeting approximately once a week for many years.

Kleiner: Once a week.

Chall: Does it still meet that often?

Kleiner: Yes, it does.

Chall: And does Herman belong?

Kleiner: Herman does belong; he doesn't attend that often, but he belongs.

Chall: What did they do besides their luncheon meetings? What kind of an organization did they have?

Kleiner: Well, they just talked over the building situation—the demand for homes through the United States in general, as to where most of the building is going on and will be going on, and so on. And it is a very worthwhile institution if you want to learn something of what is going on in the lumber industry through the country.

Chall: And so it was useful in that respect?

Kleiner: Yes, it was an educational institution.

Chall: Was there an attempt at all among the group to set their prices or check on one another's prices?

Kleiner: No, it has nothing to do with the prices of lumber.
Chall: Just social and educational.

Kleiner: That is all.

Chall: Did you help each other out in times of need in any way?

Kleiner: Oh, yes, if we needed anything that any of the sawmills had, we could always call on them for advice or material that we needed--cut especially, or whatever the case may be.

Chall: The competition was not then cut-throat, so that you made enemies of one another?

Kleiner: No, no. It never has been.

Chall: Now in Europe, the lumbermen were very largely Jewish, at least in Poland and Germany.

Kleiner: That is right, in Poland the Jews were very much interested in the lumber business.

Chall: But in this country here, it wasn't so?

Kleiner: Well, not in this part of the country. There are, in the East--in New York and Chicago--some lumber people who are Jews and are pretty-well established.

Chall: But here they are mostly what, Scandinavians?

Kleiner: Just a mixture, Scandinavians to some extent, just a mixture of Americans in general.

Chall: Did they set up lumber businesses here because they had had a family background of lumber someplace else the way you had, or did they just get into it?

Kleiner: Well, I don't know. The Scandinavian people who came here, most of them were fishermen. That is what brought them here. This was timber and logging country and many men started working in the mills and in the woods. So they got into lumber--just like starting in any other business--grocery or anything else.

During World War I there was an organization
Kleiner: called the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen which formed to try to prevent strikes in the industry at that time. It was successful then, and afterwards it just gradually disbanded.

Another lumber group that I joined was known as Hoo-Hoo's. I don't remember what the letters mean. A few years ago Burt Vaughan searched out my membership number, and he gave me a Hoo-Hoo button with my number on it. [Black Cat symbol, #40083]

Chall: Can you compare the lumber business as it was, when you started out in 1916, with what it is today? Is there much difference?

Kleiner: There is no comparison between the retail lumber yard today and the retail lumber yard fifty years back.

Chall: What is the difference?

Kleiner: In those days 2 x 4s, shiplap, and just common lumber was the main business. Since then: plywood, plastic materials of all kinds, hard boards, ceiling tile, floor tile, hardware of a different class. The 10¢ pull is not wanted anymore by the people. They want something that costs a dollar, something more up-to-the-minute.

The whole picture of the construction of homes today from what it was fifty years ago has no comparison. There are so many new ideas: prefinished plywoods, like this in here; different woods—all you have to do is cement it on to the wall and so on. There are so many new things that it is unbelievable. Prefinished hardwood flooring; many, many commodities that we did not handle in those days. They were not known.

Chall: And a retail lumber yard is expected to carry all of this?

Kleiner: A retail lumber yard, if they are an up-to-the-minute lumber yard, is supposed to carry all of this merchandise. So when a person comes into our
50 YEARS AGO — JULY 18, 1924

The Order of Hoo-Hoo (secret fraternal organization of lumbermen) will give a dinner at the Tacoma Ho-

tel. On the committee are Paul H. Johns, E. W. Wright, Karl B. Kellogg, Ernest Dolge, Everett Griggs, Lee Doud and Ralph Dickman.

An appeal from the Puyallup Chamber of Commerce was made for pickers to save the valley's berry crop.

25 YEARS AGO — JULY 18, 1949

An old-fashioned family picnic will be held Sunday when the Mason County Pioneer Association holds its annual picnic at Kneeland Park, Shelton. Grant C. Angle is president.

Kleiner: lumber yard, they can find pretty near anything and everything they ask for. If we haven't got it, we try to get it for them. But as a rule we try to carry everything that we think that somebody may desire for construction.

Chall: Well, now what about Cavanaugh? It looks as though all he carries is the plain lumber.

Kleiner: Cavanaugh is in a different line of work altogether. That is more or less of a contractor's business. They sell in larger quantities. It is they and also the Fife Lumber Company. It is a different kind of business, it is more of a contractor's jobbing institution.

Chall: Not a walk-in retail trade, as yours is.

Kleiner: To a lesser degree.

Chall: So it is the retail business that is the one that is so very different. Now what about changes in techniques of advertising. Has that changed any?

Kleiner: Well, advertising is different naturally. Advertising has gone up from $1.00, in the olden days, per square inch to about $5.00 per square inch. When you put in a third of a page, it costs you $400 or $500. And the class of advertising is different. Once in a while we list a bunch of materials that we have to sell, and the next time we just show that we carry everything for a builder; hardware, paints, and so on and so forth. And you build up a trade more with the people—men, women, white, black and otherwise, and you cater to them practically altogether. We do have some contractor business, but very, very little.

Chall: And you have always advertised though? You've considered it an important part of your business?

Kleiner: It is. We spend now, possibly at the rate of $1,000 a month on advertising. Newspapers, radio,
Kleiner: Yellow Pages, and honey.*

Chall: Except that it is more expensive, is it about the same amount as previously, or have you upped the amount?

Kleiner: Well, it costs, but it is about the same idea.

Chall: You have always advertised then?

Kleiner: We have always advertised.

Chall: Now have the differences in government regulations, and unions, and all of these taxes—have they changed your way of doing business in any way?

Kleiner: Well, naturally, the Teamsters are the most expensive human being because, besides getting good union wages they get the health fee that we pay every month, also their glasses (comes under a different heading), and so many days off for holidays, and funerals, weddings.

And then there is the Timber Worker's Union. Anybody who works in the lumber yard is supposed to belong to the Timber Worker's Union. It isn't enforced a hundred percent, but that's it. Right now, as far as mill work is concerned, or any shop work, the federal government is awfully strict on that. They have inspectors out and your machinery has got to be right up to standard or they close it right up.

Chall: For safety?

Kleiner: Yes, they penalize you up to $50,000 without even

*For some twenty-five years the Model Lumber Company has given customers a small jar of honey or marmalade with the label on the lid:

If in a "Jam"—Call
MORRIS OR HERMAN
KLEINER
Model Lumber, Tacoma
A "Honey" of a Lumber Yard
Kleiner: a trial. So you've got to be very careful. You have to have at least one man in the yard who can administer first aid. One man has to be trained for it. So the regulations are so much different and more costly than they were.

Chall: Now I can remember that you used to have one girl in the office who answered the telephone and did all the book work, and sent out the bills and all that. And then in the last few years there have been anywhere from two to three, and even then your billing is done outside.

Kleiner: Done through the bank. Still you have to have as much help as you did before.

Chall: So what has happened?

Kleiner: Well, it is a shorter day, to start with. And it is a five-day week.

Chall: Is there more of a credit business?

Kleiner: More credit business, collections too. Takes a lot of time.

Chall: More inventory?

Kleiner: Yes, that is right.

Chall: And all this requires more work in the office. Regarding the number of people who are employed--has that changed through the years? What about the people on the floor for the hardware, paint, and all?

Kleiner: Yes, you take a place like ours now there are between ten and twelve people to wait on customers, who understand hardware, plumbing, paint, and lumber.

Chall: How many drivers?

Kleiner: Between one and two. One all the time. The fellows who work in the yard take an occasional load out. Under terms of the union contract they are not supposed to deliver lumber.
Chall: How did the war affect the lumber business?

Kleiner: Well, at that time a lot of the younger group left for the army including Herman. The younger group was not here to get married, so naturally there was less housing developing. In this part of the country, over at Fort Lewis, about 40, 50, 70,000 soldiers were being trained for the war effort. Quite a few of them brought their families with them. And some of the old houses and apartments were pretty well occupied. But there was very little new construction until after the war was over.

And a lot of the soldiers who came during the war, who were trained here, settled in Tacoma, Seattle and vicinity afterwards because many of them came from either hot climates or cold climates, and the climate here in the states of Washington and Oregon appealed to a lot of them. And many of them got acquainted during the war through the U.S.O., with girls and so on, came back and married the girls and settled right here, and more housing was needed. And they started building and more and more new construction came into being then.

And a lot of the newly-married couples are still here. A lot of friends of ours whom we met during the war are all living here very happily.

Chall: So building started to boom then after the war.

Kleiner: Building started to boom.

Chall: And your business then?

Kleiner: Business got better. The demand for nearly everything.

Chall: So it was a kind of holding operation during the war. Now after the war, Herman came into the business, how did that work out?

Kleiner: Herman was in the war as a navigator and bombardier and then when he came back he didn't know just what he wanted to do. He was interested in social service work and so on, and he didn't know what he was going to do. I think he went on a vacation trip,
Kleiner: I don't remember where. When he came back, he started working in the yard, and we agreed that he could still do social service work and be in business at the same time.

While he was gone, we bought a piece of ground on Steilacoom Lake with a streetcar on it--living quarters. We used to go out on Sunday--the whole family--and put in a day and just play around, and do a little work around the place there.

So, when Herman decided to stay in the business, he and a handyman who worked for us for years, Charlie Serritella, built a tepee on that property. And eventually that became his home after he and Barbara [Burnett] were married. It's been remodeled several times into a large home.

Slowly Herman broke into the business and he has remained in it ever since.

Chall: Since the war, especially during the last ten or fifteen years, discount houses have come into being, and also a big business like Weyerhaeuser has taken over large aspects of the business. How does that affect retail lumber yards?

Kleiner: The Weyerhaeuser situation does not affect the retail business very much because they are not in the retail business. Now they are going into it; they are building houses and going to build houses and so on.

Chall: Do they affect the price of the lumber that you buy, do they affect any of that?

Kleiner: No, their prices are generally within the same price as any other mill. Costs so much for logs and so much to produce them, so the prices are about the same.

As far as the discount houses are concerned, there are lots of them, including Ernst Hardware, Meyer Drug, K-Mart and many like them. They carry lumber, and they carry hardware, and they carry paint; they carry the same things that a retail lumber yard does. Not to the same extent. They
Kleiner: carry it in smaller quantities and shorter lengths and so on, as far as the lumber is concerned. They sell a lot of plywood, they sell pre-hung doors, which is all competition to retail lumber yards.

Chall: And have you felt that rather keenly?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. You can feel that. Right now for instance, you've got Meyer Drug company starting two stores in Tacoma, and they carry hardware, paints, and lumber and doors, and things like that. They are bound to hurt. But if you are careful, you can still do business. People think they sell cheaper, but in the end they are just as high or higher than the regular retail store.

Chall: Do they sell a different quality of merchandise?

Kleiner: The same thing.

Chall: Do you tend to cut down on certain things which they carry?

Kleiner: No, we do not. We do it the same way as we did it before.

Chall: So you feel it but you don't change your methods?

Kleiner: No, we just try to fight our own battle; we just imagine that they are not existing.

Chall: And they don't meet with the lumbermen, they don't have any part of your association?

Kleiner: No, they have their own associations possibly.

Chall: Why don't we, at this time, close the story on the lumber business with what has occurred in the last year--having to move the lumber yard to another location once again.

Kleiner: We have been in business at the Model Lumber Company on Bay Street for the last forty-three years. With what is known as progress, the city of Tacoma and the state are putting a highway through our lumber yard property to connect two cities, Tacoma and Fife.
Kleiner: And after fighting the situation for a while, the city was bound to get it anyway. So the city had an appraiser and we had an appraiser, and we arrived at a certain value for the land--so much a square foot--which the city paid. But they gave us very little for the buildings. Some of the buildings were old, and some of the buildings were in pretty good shape. But anyway we got very little for the buildings. And we sold it with the understanding that we would be out last October.

Chall: You mean a year ago, or just last month?

Kleiner: Last month.

Chall: I see.

Kleiner: But the thing was postponed and the city gave us till the end of the year [1972]. We have a letter from the city stating that anything that is left on the property after the first of the year belongs to the city. So after the city purchased it and paid for it, it became their property--the tax bill and everything else. So we have been paying the rent on that property now for the last few months. And on one of the buildings that we have there, the city gave us January, February, and March [1973]. We could remain there, put some merchandise in storage there. But January, February and March will go very quickly before we know what happens. December is here and we are not out yet. The property belongs to my son. I have had no connection with it as far as owning is concerned for quite a few years. "Model Junior" is the Model Lumber Company.

So anyway we started looking for another piece of ground somewhere. We looked at a lot of vacant properties. At $30,000 an acre, you've got to fill it, you have got to do a lot of work on it. So there is a piece of property on Highway 99 which used to be a steel window factory some years ago. They went broke, and then another little lumber yard started some years afterwards and they went out of business. Then what is known as a flea market has been there for the last couple of years, leasing it. And personally, I thought and we all thought that would be
We took a walk the other day with Herman Kleiner, who is moving a Tacoma institution two miles up the road to Fife.

We walked through the main building of a remarkable old business that will exist no longer on Bay Street at the foot of the Puyallup River Bridge. "I can remember 43 years ago when my father started it," Herman said of the Model Lumber Co. "I was only 8 and he told me, 'Just think, someday all of this will be yours.'" The founder, Morris Kleiner, was right; his son eventually bought him out. But just think: Three months ago, Herman toyed with the idea of giving up the business, of getting away from the grind and the stress. Then, to the relief of longtime customers, he decided to stick with it. And there must be original patrons around who — along with sons and grandsons — exclaimed, "Better a Kleiner in Fife than none at all in lumber and hardware!" Herman gave several reasons for his decision to retain the company. For one thing, he could not bring himself to break the family's ties with the Tacoma area. Without a Kleiner in business, there would be no more jars of honey handed out as a traditional public relations and advertising gimmick ("A Honey of a Lumber Yard").

"We still have some honey left," said Herman, who is short, slight and good-humored, "so obviously I can't quit." He sounded not unlike his father, 83, who uses the same excuse for ignoring retirement and showing up twice a week to work. As for the stress and strain, Herman seemed optimistic that the relocated operation would be less demanding.

But along with the memories and the history, he had a particular problem on his mind the day of our stroll: How was he going to squeeze all the dry lumber from Bay Street's 30,000 square feet of covered space into a much smaller building area on the Fife site?

Herman has sold the two-acre Tacoma property and its structures to the city ... which plans an extensive realignment of streets in the immediate area. He could have kept the operation there "but it would have to be a kind of cut-up situation, not at all desirable." And for a time after the sale, he was considering an exodus from the lumber business. Then Herman had his change of heart and acquired six acres two miles away on Pacific Highway East in Fife. Eventually, the new home of Model Lumber and its hardware store will occupy 33,000 square feet of building space ...

But when the company — closed since Nov. 18 — reopens next week on Pacific Highway, it will have only two structures of some 8,000 square feet. A great amount of the inventory, especially lumber, is being stored in a former Kleiner warehouse on the now city-owned Bay Street property. And the situation goes against the grain of the meticulous Herman, who would like to have all his materials with him in the new place ... Until he arranges to shelter the entire lumber stock in Fife, he will be leasing his old warehouse from the city ...
If he seemed sour and dour, Herman told us, "I apologize." He said he certainly had no criticism of municipal government; his negotiations with the city were most pleasant. And so we gathered that he was suffering briefly from a common malady — the emotional upset of leaving a place that holds so many memories, so much and so long a part of his life.

Morris, his Polish-born father who came to the United States via Canada, started Model Lumber "when the old Interurban ran right past the front." And the first customers were the same people who had bought from Morris when he ran the Liberty Lumber Co. at South 41st and M. "I remember coming down here Saturdays during the Depression as a kid and operating an old adding machine when cash sales per day were only $8 and $9," Herman said.

The business now provides a living for 10 families, not counting the Kleiners. (Herman's wife Barbara serves as bookkeeper. And their black and white Collie, Bob, currently is proving a most alert watchdog for the Bay Street inventory).

"The new place is going to look a little more sophisticated when we get through placing all the merchandise," Herman said. "But I still want to retain the earthy character of an old-fashioned lumber yard." That's the kind, of course, that gives away honey.
Model Lumber Plans Expanded Facility

Lumber Firm Moving To New Facility

Model Lumber & Ace Hardware will move during January to a newly remodeled facility located at 4301 Pacific Highway E., according to Herman Kleiner, owner. The site comprises six acres and is located on Old Highway 99 between Tacoma and Fife.

Over the next few months the building will be enlarged from its present area of 8,000 square feet to an area of 33,000 square feet. It will house an entire lumber yard under one roof.

The firm found it necessary to vacate its old location at 2424 Bay St. because of the City of Tacoma's plans to realign the street in the area.

Model Lumber was founded in 1929 by Morris Kleiner, now 83, father of Herman. The elder Kleiner still spends some time at the store.

The company has 10 full-time employees.

Jere Johnson of the Custom Design Co., Tacoma, assisted Herman Kleiner in planning the new facility. The main building in the expansion project will be built by the Wright Co., of Tacoma.
Kleiner: the best location because there is a building on it now. It is a steel building which will help immediately.

Well, anyway, we are remodeling that one now. We've got about 4.8 of an acre there which is plenty big enough. Too big possibly for us at the present time. And we've got to put up two more buildings besides that old one that is being remodeled. And possibly by the time my son gets through with the inventory now, he will have an investment there of about $500,000. A lot of it has to be borrowed. And we hope it will continue to make a profit.

It will take a couple, three months before we move there completely and in the meantime we are out of business. The place is closed because we are bundling everything, tying everything, strapping everything to be moved. We are getting a price for moving, which we hope the city and the state will pay for.* It will cost about $30,000 to move this stock.

Chall: Just down the road a few miles.

Kleiner: From the old place to the new one. And it will cost money to stand it up, and lay it down where it belongs and so on.

Chall: Well, it is a big change, but the name will go on.

Kleiner: The name will go on. Model Lumber Company.

Business, Fraternal, and Other Associations

Chall: When you were, all these years, in the lumber business, did you feel that you were accepted among the business community as a Jew?

June, 1974 they paid $28,000. M.K.
Kleiner: By the Christian world, so-called? I was very much accepted and very much looked up to from the time I started here, through all these years, even today.

Chall: You never felt any anti-Semitism?

Kleiner: I never felt any anti-Semitism or any feelings against me or my family.

Chall: Can you recall who were your friends in the early years among the lumbering people?

Kleiner: The Dempsey people, the John Dower Lumber Company, the Dannaher Lumber Company, Dolge Lumber Company [Ernest Dolge], the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company.

Chall: Did these people become your social friends too?

Kleiner: No, they were just business associates. City Lumber Company.

Chall: Can you remember the names of some of the people? Was John Dower, the John Dower Lumber Company? And Dannaher of Dannaher Lumber Company? Who was City Lumber?

Kleiner: Paul Johns. Dickman Lumber Company. Mr. Dickman of the Dickman Lumber Company. There is a sawmill still operating today. Dickman, Jr. is now running the mill.

Chall: You were a Mason.

Kleiner: Fifty years in the Masons, fifty years in the Scottish Rite, and fifty years in the Shrine. I joined the Masons in Calgary at age twenty.

Chall: Why did you join the Masons?

Kleiner: It just appealed to me.

Chall: Did you enjoy your contacts with the Masons over the years?

Kleiner: Oh yes, I still go to Lodge meetings occasionally.
And you liked the men who are in it, by and large?

Oh, yes.

But did you go to Shrine conventions, or any of the big things that they do--get that active in it?

No, none of the big things.

Did you take any offices ever?

None in the Masons. Kiwanis Club. I've been a member about forty-five years.

And why did you join Kiwanis as opposed, let's say, to Lions or Rotary?

I was approached by a friend of mine to join.

That contact you really stuck with?

You meet the same kind of people that you are doing business with all the time. And I have been a member of the Boy's Club for the last forty-five years.

You have been on their board, haven't you?

I have been president of the Boy's Club one year. I am still on the board; go to meetings twice a month. And I am on the board of the Tacoma Little Theater.

What do you do on that board?

We just pick the plays. Virginia Woolfe. We had that play on here you know, and one evening was devoted to the Catholic group. And they cancelled it at the last moment and we had no show on that night. Mother and I were supposed to act as host and hostess but the thing was cancelled.

Did that create a great stir?

Yes.

I belonged to the B'nai B'rith for the last fifty some years, and I have a certificate from Rabbi Magnin. Do you want to read that?
January 24, 1973

Mr. Morris Kleiner
620 Carr Street
Tacoma, Washington 98404

Dear Morris:

It provided me with a great deal of pleasure to personally represent Boys' Clubs of America, in presenting the Bronze Keystone Award to you, for long and devoted service to Boys, at your Organization's Annual Meeting on January 22, 1973.

I know of no one more deserving of this prestigious Award than you.

Warmest Congratulations again, and All Best Wishes for many more years of dedicated loyal service to Boys and Boys' Clubs.

Most sincerely,

Arthur M. Dunning
Regional Director

AMD: ho
cc: Mr. Paulsen
     Mr. Danielson

Appointing me deputy of the district.

I see. Were you ever active in the Chamber of Commerce?

Yes, I am a member of the Chamber of Commerce. I have been a member of the Chamber of Commerce, at all times.

The only organizations then in which you took a leading position, like being on the board or something was the Boy's Club. Or did you ever get onto the board of the Kiwanis Club?

Oh, yes. I was the vice-president one year of the Kiwanis Club.

What about Goodwill?

Oh, yes, I was on the board of the Goodwill Industries for a couple of years. I am still taking an interest in the Goodwill Industries.

If you hadn't taken an interest in these groups, do you think it would have been any different with respect to doing business? Does this kind of association help?

Yes. Well, I don't think it helped any as far as the business is concerned. It was just a matter of getting acquainted, and meeting people, and doing your share in the community. You don't join these from a business point of view. Naturally you make friends that way and get some business from it.

So your main interest in being active was in being a part of the community and assisting the community.

Yes.

I recall that you and mother used to take an active
Chall: part in the Community Chest drives. Were either of you on the board?

Kleiner: I was on the board of the Red Cross, but not the Community Chest, even though we both always worked on the fund drives.

**Property Transactions**

Chall: Can you describe some of your various property transactions?

Kleiner: In 1927 we purchased property at Steilocoom Lake, which was known as DeKoven Inn property. It consisted of a hotel or inn, and a house--chicken house--which we remodeled into a four-bedroom home. Do you remember?

Chall: I remember the house. I didn't know that it had started out as a chicken house.

Kleiner: Yes, and it was right on Steilocoom Lake. We lived there about one year and a half--through 1928.

Chall: What about those cabins? They were really houses.

Kleiner: We built eight cabins on that property, but it was hard to rent those after we built them. We couldn't get $25 a month out of them. People were not waterfront forty some years ago as they are today. Today you can hardly buy a piece of waterfront anywhere. And if you do, it costs a fortune. So we lived there for a couple of years. We still kept our house on 1508 North Sixth unsold.

The children went to Park Lodge School. And my wife wasn't too happy there because she was away from everybody, although she had a car. In those days, she got an automobile but she wasn't too happy. It was too far from the people that we knew in town, too far from--

Chall: Sunday School.

Kleiner: Sunday School and so on, so we decided that we would
Kleiner: rent the place out which we did.

In the meantime [1930] we bought a piece of property out at Harbor Heights which is out on the Sound on Vashon Island. It was a big old house, used to belong to Congressman Coffee's family. And we lived there through the summer months.

When my father and stepmother visited here from the old country, they stayed with us there and they enjoyed it very, very much, especially the fruit trees. He used to pick the apples that would fall and bring them into the house. He couldn't see them wasted. He said that it was too bad to see them wasted, so we had to make applesauce.

We lived there a few seasons. We had lots of good neighbors through there; we enjoyed the place very much. But then there was always the scare that the children would go out in the water in the boat that we had and so on, and so it was always a scare. Their mother was always worried that they would drown or something, so we sold the house after a few [eight] years.

Chall: By that time we were all teenagers, so we were about ready to stop going anyway.

Kleiner: That is right.

Chall: What did you do with the property at DeKoven, did you hang onto that for a long time?

Kleiner: The property at DeKoven I hung onto for quite a while. Then we sold it, traded it as part payment on an apartment house in town here.

Chall: Was that the Avalon?

Kleiner: The Avalon Apartments, which was not a paying proposition. We lost money on it. It was misrepresented to me. I didn't know too much about apartments, apart from what was represented to me. And we traded that for the old Nelson-Bennett home.

Chall: Oh, is that right?
Kleiner: Yes, and some other properties in Tacoma. We didn't get our money out of it but anyway, we got something.

Chall: The Nelson-Bennett home would have been a pretty good trade. You got some fine old furniture out of there. Then didn't the phone company take it over?

Kleiner: No, no. We sold it and a restaurant was built on it by Mr. Meeker.

Chall: I remember the restaurant, but not who built it.

Kleiner: They ran the restaurant for a few years and sold it, and built a restaurant on Port of Tacoma known as Johnny's Dock. They were the first ones that ran a restaurant there. And then afterwards that property was remodeled into the present telephone company building.

Chall: But you didn't own it at that time. How did you do all this property purchasing and exchanging? When you say you traded one for the other, how was that done?

Kleiner: Real estate agents. Trading back and forth. The property at DeKoven was free and clear. The Avalon Apartments took all the equities we had -- The Steilocoom Lake property, and another building we had on I Street, and so on. They took that as part payment on it and I owed the balance to be paid so much a month out of the rentals. The rentals didn't produce enough to make the payments. The thing was a misrepresented deal right from the beginning.

Anyway we did the best we could. After I sold the Nelson-Bennett home to Berkheimer of the Berkheimer Manufacturing Company, I bought the Edgecliffe Apartments.

Chall: How long did you have the Edgecliffe Apartments?

Kleiner: About twenty years.

Chall: You always dealt with the same bank because they helped you get started. What about the realtors?
Looking Backward

25 YEARS AGO — MARCH 20, 1946

Work is beginning on reopening of the Wapato Lake swimming hole, closed July 2, 1942, because a storm sewer draining there made it unsafe.

The Edgecliff Apartments, at North 1st and Broadway, has been sold for E. W. Allison to Morris Kleiner for $80,000.

Keppy's Orchestra, "finest orchestra in town," at the new Merry Max Ballroom, upstairs at 8th Avenue and Anderson.

25 YEARS AGO—NOV. 9, 1945

The Nelson Bennett mansion at 525 Broadway will be torn down to make way for Crawford's Sea Grill. The property was bought from Morris Kleiner for $30,000.

City stockmen A. T. Snow and G. Richards this morning captured a big live porcupine from a tree at South 43rd and Union and took it to Pt. Defiance Park zoo.
Chall: Did you deal with different ones when you were doing all this real estate, building-trading, or did you just work with whichever ones were working on the property?

Kleiner: Whichever ones were interested in the trade.

Chall: Did you prefer to deal in the land and buildings than, let's say stocks and bonds, or other kinds of things that people might be doing?

Kleiner: Tried stocks and bonds once or twice and they always were the ones that were worthless.

Chall: I see.

Kleiner: When I bought a piece of 2 x 4 I knew exactly what it cost me and what it was worth, and I still feel the same way about it now.

Chall: So you feel more certain purchasing lands and buildings. You can see it.

Kleiner: That's right.

Chall: And deal with it immediately if troubles pop up. Then you bought, from time to time, other land. I remember Lake Louise. And there were probably quite a few others I never knew about, but I remember Lake Louise. [Laughter]


Chall: Well those today, they would be at a premium, wouldn't they?

Kleiner: I bought Swan Lake. [Laughs]

Chall: I don't know about Swan Lake. [Laughter] But they were just too far out at the time for any kind of venture?

Kleiner: Always somebody wanted it worse than I did. If I could get the money out and a little more, I would let it go instead of holding it. If I would have held the property that I bought--at Shelton especially--South Tacoma Way--I had a beautiful piece of ground there. And the one on Union Avenue--If I
Kleiner: had kept all that, I could have told the world to go to hell! [Laughter]

Chall: Well, who was to know what would have happened in the last fifteen years. It has just all changed.

Kleiner: I always figured if a fellow needed it, if he could do something with it more than I could, that--not that he was entitled to it, but he should have it. So if I got my money out of it and a little more, I just let it go.

Chall: You didn't really care to hold it forever? You didn't want to hold land just for holding purposes?

Kleiner: No.
IV  THE TACOMA COMMUNITY

The Jewish Community

Chall: Now you have helped build up the temple over the last fifty some years. What was in the Jewish community when you came?

Kleiner: It was just a little synagogue on about 25th and Tacoma Avenue. Then we built a new one on North 4th and Jay [Reform], known as Beth Israel. There was also the Orthodox synagogue on South 4th and I. That has been dismantled. Now we have the new Temple Beth El on South 12th Street [Reform]. About a half a million dollar institution.

Chall: How many Jews were there in Tacoma when you came, in about 1916?

Kleiner: In 1916 there were approximately fifty or sixty families.

Chall: Did they almost all belong to the 25th and Tacoma Avenue synagogue?

Kleiner: No, most of them belonged to that North 4th and Jay.

Chall: But that didn't exist at the time you moved in.

Kleiner: No.

Chall: Were the Jews divided in any way?

Kleiner: They were divided between the Orthodox and Reform group.

Chall: Who used the 25th and Tacoma Avenue synagogue?
If he knew this were being printed, Morris Kleiner would do all in his power to have it omitted, for he seeks no acclaim, no adulation. Publication of this book without such a tribute to the man whose personal energy has made the Golden Jubilee the success it is would, to say the least, be a grave injustice.

Editor.

"We are lucky to have a Morris Kleiner in Tacoma."

These words, spoken by a prominent member of the Congregation recently, voice the sentiments of not only the congregation, but all Tacoma as well.

He has his business to attend, just as you and I, and his success has not been due to mere chance. But a dozen times a day, his telephone rings with this request or that. There is a job to be done, and he does it—quietly, efficiently, diplomatically, down to the last detail. No job is too large, too small, too distasteful.

Whatever the cause, you will always find Morris Kleiner among the hardest workers and the most generous donors. Is it the Community Chest? Merit awards for outstanding work indicate his whole-hearted support. Is it the Y. M. C. A.? His name on the board of directors attests his interest and activity. Is it the Red Cross? His efforts for this great organization have not gone unnoted.

Is it a Jewish cause? His positions, past president of the Federated Jewish Fund, Congregation Beth Israel, Bnai Brith are but small indications of his tireless effort in behalf of Jewish organizations.

Tacoma is lucky to have a Morris Kleiner. More than that, all Tacoma is proud to claim Morris Kleiner as a citizen, and the Jewish community is proud to give him this small measure of acclaim for his untiring efforts for the good of mankind.
Kleiner: The Orthodox group.

Chall: And the Reform group didn't have any place?

Kleiner: The Reform group used to rent a room for the holidays, and for Friday night services.

Chall: Among the fifty or sixty families, about how were they divided, do you remember?

Kleiner: Oh, about fifteen to twenty in the Reform group and the others were Orthodox.

Chall: Did you affiliate with one or the other of them very soon?

Kleiner: We affiliated with all of them.

Chall: When you first came in 1916 did you go to either one?

Kleiner: I went quite a few times.

Chall: To which one?

Kleiner: Mostly the Reform.

Chall: Can you remember any of the people in that Reform group?

Kleiner: Yes, there was the Meyer Jacob family.

Chall: What was his business?

Kleiner: He was in the ladies ready-to-wear business. The Feist and Bachrach family had a department store--Feist and Bachrach. [Theo Feist, Joseph Bachrach--brothers-in-law] The Lee Lewis family had a men's clothing store--Lees. Art Simon family were in the jewelry business. Joe Weinstein was in ladies ready-to-wear, as was Moe Lyon. That was about it, the main ones that took interest in the community. Especially Mr. Theo Feist, whose wife Jessie is still alive. She took great interest in the temple and also in the Council of Jewish Women. Sam Andrews was also active and was in ladies ready-to-wear.
Chall: Had these people been here for any length of time or were they just getting started?

Kleiner: Some of them were already here before I came.

Chall: And had they been here long enough to be pretty well-established?

Kleiner: Oh, yes.

Chall: Do you recall whether these people were mainly Polish or German background?

Kleiner: Well, most of them were German background, and some were Polish, but most of them were German.

Chall: And in the Orthodox group can you recall any of the people who were there at all?

Kleiner: In the Orthodox group, Phil Brodsky--

Chall: He was already here?

Kleiner: Yes, he was in the tailoring business at Fort Lewis--army uniforms.

Chall: Was Mr. Wittenberg [Bernard] here?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. Bernard Wittenberg and his brother Nathan were in the glove manufacturing business. [Wittenberg Mfg. Co.]

Chall: What about the Friedman family, were they here at all yet?

Kleiner: The Friedman family were members of the Orthodox group at the time, and slowly they joined the temple.

Chall: Were the Friedmans--all of those brothers--here at the time that you came?

Kleiner: They came here and started their business about the same time I did. There was Morris Friedman, and Nathan, Sam, Harry, Phil Friedman--there were about seven or eight Friedman brothers, and in-laws and so on. They sold mens clothing and shoes, and jewelry.
Chall: What about the Sussmans? Were they here?

Kleiner: The Sussman family started business just about the same time I did. There was Joe Sussman and his brother, Frank. They were in what was known at that time as the junk and steel business.

Chall: Did they start out in that business about the same way they have always carried it on?

Kleiner: Yes, they started their business by just peddling--buying junk from door to door.

Chall: Now were these people primarily German or were they Polish and Russians?

Kleiner: No, they were Russians, mostly Russian Jews. There was the Warnick [Harris] family that started the millwork business about the same time that I started in the retail lumber business. [Puget Sound Mfg. Co. He was from Glasgow.] The Weinstone family [K.] who were in the junk business. There was the Tone family [Robert] who was in the grocery business on South 38th and M.

Chall: Most of these people then--whether they were Orthodox or Reform--were merchants primarily.

Kleiner: They were merchants.

Chall: Did they set up their businesses in the main downtown section, the Broadway area?

Kleiner: The first people I mentioned, were in the Broadway section. Other businesses were more in the Pacific Avenue section of Tacoma. Also the Commerce Street section had quite a few new and used furniture stores run by the Klegman [Dave] and the Rotman [Harry] families. The used furniture business was a big business in those days. There were also Sam Wasserman and Ben Slotnick in that business.

Chall: Used furniture. How would they get it used?

Kleiner: People would buy new furniture and sell their old furniture. It was quite a business. That business was all on Commerce Street.
And the used furniture would be bought by the same people who would buy used furniture now--people who were just getting started, coming in . . .

That is correct. Of course, there were many others here at that time, and over the years--some came, some left--too many to list here.

So these two groups of Jews with their different approaches to worship were here. Did they mingle with each other socially or any other way in the early days?

Oh, yes they did. They mingled, and as years went by the sons and daughters joined the Conservative synagogue to start with and afterwards became members of the Reform temple. I worked in both. One year, I was president of the Reform Temple Beth Israel and treasurer of the Conservative Temple Sinai.

In the earliest days when the synagogue that was in existence had an actual place, did they have a rabbi?

Oh, yes. They had a rabbi at all times. They had one mostly for short periods of time until Rabbi Bernard Treiger came for a number of years. It was at that time that it changed from an Orthodox to a Conservative service.

Do you recall when Temple Beth Israel and the Orthodox shul were built?

The Temple Beth Israel, and the synagogue [Talmud Torah] were built about the same time. They go back about fifty years possibly. Where did you go to Sunday School?

Beth Israel. They were both fairly good-sized structures and must have taken some money to build. Can you recall the days of deciding to build the Temple Beth Israel and what it was like to design it, and any of that sort of background?

Well, Sam Andrews was the main leader at that time, interested in building of the temple. We had an
History of Temple Beth Israel

By HANNAH WEINSTEIN  
President of  
Ladies Auxiliary

On the tenth day of September in the year 1893 a beautiful house of prayer was dedicated to the glory of God and was called Temple Beth Israel.

It was located on the corner of South Tenth and "J" Streets in the City of Tacoma and I am told that without exception, every Jewish inhabitant was present at its dedication, which also included a vast number of non-Jewish friends.

Dr. Adolphe Danziger, of San Francisco, a famous Hebrew author and divine, assisted by S. Jacoby, the then President of the Congregation, dedicated the new temple with impressive services and beautiful songs of Israel were sung by the choir.

A three-story frame building beautiful in design with stained glass memorial windows and the Ten Commandments greeted one's eye over the doorway.

It was indeed a source of pride and joy to every Jewish family in the community.

Though it could in no way be compared to the huge temples and elaborate synagogues that many people worship in today, nevertheless, one could feel upon entering its holy portals that here indeed was a sanctuary, wherein one might commune with God and secure for oneself that contentment of the soul, the golden key, to which humanity in its mad scramble constantly overlooks.

From time to time noted Rabbis from nearby cities were engaged to conduct services for the various Holy Days and the Temple Beth Israel was a home of spiritual worship for all Tacoma Jewry, and beautiful friendships were made that have continued to this day; one and all working for the same cause—that of Judaism.

The growth of the city and the organization surpassed its quarters and the Congregation empowered the Trustees of the Temple to secure another location for a new building.

A site was purchased on the corner of North Fourth and "J" Streets and a committee was appointed to draw up plans for a brick and tile structure with modern facilities for the fast growing Community.

In the meantime, the former property of the Temple changed hands and became the property of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Seventh Day Adventists) who have kept the building up-to-date in every way, and who, I am told, considered themselves fortunate in securing the same.

So much for the early history of Tacoma's House of Worship, and details connected with its activities.

New Building Dedicated in 1923

On the 18th day of September in the year 1923, a new and most imposing building of Moorish design of brick and tile construction was dedicated and Beth Israel opened a new Temple in which to worship.

The dedicatory address was delivered by Rabbi Herman Rosenwasser of San Francisco who came to Tacoma especially for this occasion.

Next followed short talks by Theo. Feist, President of the Congregation, Mayor A. V. Fawcett, D. Solis-Cohen of Portland, Bishop Frederick Keator of Tacoma, Rev. J. W. Kennedy, D.D., of Tacoma; Dr. N. B. Krueger, Rabbi of Congregation Ahavai-Sholem, Portland, and Nathan Eckstein of Seattle.

The key to the temple which stands at North 4th and "J" Streets and was erected at a cost of $40,000 was handed to Sam'l A. Andrews, Chairman of the building committee, by Frances Jacobs, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Jacobs. With words of appreciation for his co-workers, Mr. Lee Lewis and Mr. Jos. Weinstein, Mr. Andrews handed the key to the finished building to President Feist.

He, with Vice-President Weinstein, took part with Rabbi Rosenwasser in the placing of the Sacred Scroll of the Law in the Ark of the Synagogue.

The new temple was dedicated to the "Teaching of the eternal truths to all" by Rabbi Rosenwasser in his address.

Now, that the Congregation was settled in its new house of worship, events came thick and fast. Plans were made to hold a bazaar and ways and means discussed how money could be raised to pay off the indebtedness.

It is remarkable how much was accomplished in those days by a handful of members.

But work they did, the Ladies of the Auxiliary to the Temple, namely, "The Sisterhood," gave dinners, card parties, dances, and assumed responsibility for the social events in order to lighten the debt.

New members were added to the roster and new life entered into the work of the Temple.

Sincere cooperation was the outcome of the enthusiasm that prevailed, and that same feeling exists today. I know whereof I speak.

Harold Davis, Lay-Preacher

It is now some time since we have had a permanent Rabbi with us.

Today and for the past two years Mr. Harold Davis has been our lay-preacher, besides being President of the Congregation.

He has never missed reading a Friday night service, sometimes giving a lecture on Jewish topics of interest, always on

(Continued on Page 22)
the alert for the good and welfare of the Congregation, never misses an opportunity to promote congeniality among all sects, our own and others. In fact, the Congregation considers itself most fortunate in having at its helm a man of unusual attainments.

Is he a benedict? Most certainly. That may account for his admirable work, in the fact that he has in the person of Mrs. Harold Davis a most charming wife, who no doubt is the inspiration for his good work in the Temple Beth Israel.

Officers of the Temple are: Mr. Harold Davis, President; Mr. Herman Jacobs, Vice-President; Mrs. Hy Mandales, Secretary; Mrs. Leon Kleiner, Recording Secretary; Mr. M. Lyon, Treasurer.

Trustees of the Temple are Mr. Theo. Feist, Mr. Lee Lewis, Mr. Morris Kleiner.

Mr. Morris Kleiner is chairman of the House Committee. There never was a more efficient chairman of any committee than Mr. Kleiner. Always ready and willing to cooperate in every way possible, he sees to it that the building and the grounds of the Temple are most satisfactorily taken care of. Mr. Lewis and Mrs. Ray establish are also on this Committee and always approve of Mr. Kleiner's efforts.

Choir of Members

The Temple maintains its own choir consisting of its members, namely, Mrs. I. F. Jacobs, Mrs. M. Kleiner and Mrs. M. Lyon, whose services are voluntarily given and are greatly enjoyed. Services are held every Friday night and these ladies are never absent except for illness. The Temple Beth Israel goes on record by saying that we are indeed proud of our choir, their value is far above rubies, the hearts of their husbands trusteth in them, and who appreciate and value more than their children who are thrilled when during our services they behold their beloved ones blending their sweet voices in the songs of Israel.

Mr. Chas. Horowitz, a graduate of Temple De Hirsch of Seattle, is the principal of the Religious School. It has an enrollment of thirty-five pupils.

Confirmation exercise have been held regularly.

The past year Rabbi Sam'l Koch of Temple De Hirsch confirmed the 1930 class. It will long be remembered as one of the most beautiful and impressive confirmations ever witnessed by our members and friends.

Sisterhood Work

The Auxiliary to the Temple is called the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Israel. It has on its roster about 40 women.

Its officers are: Mrs. Jos. R. Weinstein, President; Mrs. Herman Jacobs, Vice-President; Mrs. Rob't Warnick, Secretary; Mrs. Lee Lewis, Treasurer.

In season the Sisterhood conducts outside of monthly meetings, social events, dances, dinners, picnics and etc.

A sewing circle with Mrs. Leon Kleiner as chairman meets twice a month in the homes of its members. Articles are sewed and later on sold, which add to no small part of our funds.

Mrs. Theo. Feist, Chairman of the Religious school, is ably assisted by Mrs. M. Kleiner and Mrs. M. Lyon.

Chairman of Unionsgrams, Mrs. I. F. Jacobs.

Chairman of Publicity, Mrs. H. M. Alexander.

Chairman of Tel. Com., Mrs. Saul Friedman, assisted by Mrs. Herbert Cheim, Mrs. Sam Thorne, Mrs. Robert Thorne.

Sabbath Hospitality Chairman, Mrs. M. Lyon.

Rabbi for Coming High Holy Days

For the coming High Holy Days the Temple has secured the services of Rabbi J. K. Levin of Los Angeles who will officiate. Services will be as follows:

Monday eve, September 22 at 8 o'clock—"The Pasing Hours."

Tuesday A. M., September 23 at 10 o'clock—"Taking Stock."

Friday eve, September 26 at 8 o'clock—"Sabbath of Repentance." "Placing the Blame."

Wednesday eve, October 1 at 8 o'clock—" Forgiving and Forgiven."

Thursday A. M., October 2 at 8 o'clock—"Sins of the Tongue."

Memorial Services — "Immortality of the Soul."

Wishing All Our Friends
A Very Happy New Year

Mr. and Mrs. Morris Kleiner

To All Our Friends:

Mr. and Mrs. H. Warnick

"Le-Shona Tovah Tekatethu
Ve-Tehasemu"

To All Our Friends:

Mr. and Mrs. H. Warnick

The Store for Book Lovers
is now located at
1203 Pacific Ave.,
Tacoma, Wash.
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On the 18th day of September in the year 1923, a new and most imposing building of Moorish design of brick and tile construction was dedicated and Beth Israel opened a new Temple in which to worship.

The dedicatory address was delivered by Rabbi Herman Rosenwasser of San Francisco who came to Tacoma especially for this occasion.

Next followed short talks by Theo. Feist, President of the Congregation, Mayor A. V. Fawcett, D. Solis-Cohen of Portland, Bishop Frederick Kestor of Tacoma, Rev. J. W. Kennedy, D. D., of Tacoma; Dr. N. B. Krueger, Rabbi of Congregation Ahavai-Sholem, Portland, and Nathan Eckstein of Seattle.

The key to the temple which stands at North 4th and "J" Streets and was erected at a cost of $40,000 was handed to Samuel A. Andrews, Chairman of the building committee, by Frances Jacobs, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Jacobs.

With words of appreciation for his co-workers, Mr. Lee Lewis and Mr. Jos. Weinsteine Mr. Andrews handed the key to the finished building to President Feist.

He, with Vice-President Weinsteine took part with Rabbi Rosenwasser in the placing of the Sacred Scroll of the Law in the Ark of the Synagogue.

The new temple was dedicated to the “Teaching of the eternal truths to all” by Rabbi Rosenwasser in his address.

Now, that the Congregation was settled in its new house of worship, events came thick and fast. Plans were made to hold a bazaar and ways and means discussed how money could be raised to pay off the indebtedness.

It is remarkable how much was accomplished in those days by a handful of members.

But work they did, the Ladies of the Auxiliary to the Temple, namely, “The Sisterhood,” gave dinners, card parties, dances, and assumed responsibility for the social events in order to lighten the debt.

New members were added to the roster and new life entered into the work of the Temple.

Sincere cooperation was the outcome of the enthusiasm that prevailed, and that same feeling exists today. I know whereof I speak.

Harold Davis, Lay-Preacher

It is now some time since we have had a permanent Rabbi with us.

Today and for the past two years Mr. Harold Davis has been our lay-preacher, besides being President of the Congregation.

He has never missed reading a Friday night service, sometimes gives a lecture on Jewish topics of interest, always on (Continued on Page 22)
Temple Beth Israel

(Continued from Page 20)

the alert for the good and welfare of the Congregation, never misses an opportunity to promote congeniality among all sects, our own and others. In fact, the Congregation considers itself most fortunate in having at its helm a man of unusual attainments.

Is he a beneficent? Most certainly. That may account for his admirable work, in the fact that he has in the person of Mrs. Harold Davis a most charming wife, who no doubt is the inspiration for his good work in the Temple Beth Israel.

Officers of the Temple are: Mr. Harold Davis, President; Mr. Herman Jacobs, Vice-President; Mrs. Hy Mandles, Secretary; Mrs. Leon Kleiner, Recording Secretary; Mr. M. Lyon, Treasurer.

Trustees of the Temple are Mr. Theo. Feist, Mr. Lee Lewis, Mr. Morris Kleiner:

Mr. Morris Kleiner is chairman of the House Committee. There never was a more efficient chairman of any committee than Mr. Kleiner. Always ready and willing to cooperate in every possible way, he sees to it that the building and the grounds of the Temple are most satisfactorily taken care of. Mr. Lee Lewis and Mr. Jos. Weinstein are also on this Committee and always approve of Mr. Kleiner’s efforts.

Choir of Members

The Temple maintains its own choir consisting of its members, namely, Mrs. I. F. Jacobs, Mrs. M. Kleiner and Mrs. M. Lyon, whose services are voluntarily given and are greatly enjoyed. Services are held every Friday night and these ladies are never absent except for illness. The Temple Beth Israel goes on record by saying that we are indeed proud of our choir, their value is far above rubies, the hearts of their husbands trusteth in them, and who can appreciate and value more than their children who are thrilled when during our services they behold their beloved ones blending their sweet voices in the songs of Israel.

Mr. Chas. Horowitz, a graduate of Temple De Hirsch of Seattle, is the principal of the Religious School. It has an enrollment of thirty-five pupils.

Confirmation exercise have been held regularly.

The past year Rabbi Sam’l Koch of Temple De Hirsch confirmed the 1930 class. It will long be remembered as one of the most beautiful and impressive confirmations ever witnessed by our members and friends.

All of them, as well as the Sisterhood of Temple Beth Israel. It has on its roster about 40 women. Its officers are: Mrs. Jos. R. Weinstein, President; Mrs. Herman Jacobs, Vice-President; Mrs. Rob’t Warnick, Secretary; Mrs. Lee Lewis, Treasurer.

In season the Sisterhood conducts outings of monthly meetings, social events, dances, dinners, picnics etc.

A sewing circle with Mrs. Leon Kleiner as chairman meets twice a month in the homes of its members. Articles are sewed and later on sold, which add to no small part of our funds.

Mrs. Theo. Feist, Chairman of the Religious school, is ably assisted by Mrs. M. Kleiner and Mrs. M. Lyon.

Chairman of Unions, Mrs. I. F. Jacobs.

Chairman of Publicity, Mrs. H. M. Alexander.

Chairman of Tel. Com., Mrs. Saul Friedman, assisted by Mrs. Herbert Chein, Mrs. Sam Thorne, Mrs. Robert Thorne.

Sabbath Hospitality Chairman, Mrs. M. Lyon.

Rabbi for Coming High Holy Days

For the coming High Holy Days the Temple has secured the services of Rabbi J. K. Levin of Los Angeles who will officiate. Services will be as follows:

Monday eve, September 22 at 8 o’clock—“The Pasing Hours.”

Tuesday A. M., September 23 at 10 o’clock—“Taking Stock.”

Friday eve, September 26 at 8 o’clock—“Sabbath of Repentance.” “Placing the Blame.”

Wednesday eve, October 1 at 8 o’clock—“Forgiving and Forgiven.”

Thursday A. M., October 2 at 8 o’clock—“Sins of the Tongue.”

Memorial Services—“Immortality of the Soul.”

Wishing All Our Friends
A Very Happy New Year

Mr. and Mrs. Morris Kleiner
And Family

“Le-Shona Tovah Tekathevu
Ve-Tehasemu”

To All Our Friends

Mr. and Mrs.
H. Warnick
And Family

Walsh, Books
The Store for Book Lovers
is now located at
1203 Pacific Ave.,
Tacoma, Wash.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Sussman
And Family

Extend to their Friends
Greetings of the New Year
Kleiner: architect. It was designed for Sunday school rooms in the balcony, and a stage for plays, and the main sanctuary, and also a kitchen and restrooms and so on. It was a beautiful building, except it got too small. As the community grew, the younger generation thought that it should have a different kind of a building, and that is how the Temple Beth El developed. They sold the Temple on North 4th and Jay and used part of the money toward the new building on which we still have a good-sized mortgage. They also merged with Temple Sinai on South 4th and I and used that facility until the new Temple Beth El was built.

Chall: In the interim, though, between the time that Beth Israel was built and you moved, that served the purposes. What kinds of rabbis were available through those years? Were you able to keep a full-time rabbi all the time?

Kleiner: Well, we always had a full-time rabbi. We had Rabbi Montague Cohen for quite a few years. And then afterwards we had Rabbi Rosenberg [Bernard], who is now in Stockton. Since then we have had Rabbi Rosenthal [Richard] for the last fourteen years.

Chall: When you started out building the old Beth Israel, how many were there--about twenty-five to thirty families?

Kleiner: That was about the amount of families that actually took an interest in the thing. More joined after the thing was built. There was some place more desirable to go to. It helped the social life of the community too, because we had services every Friday night and served tea and refreshments after the services which helped bring people together. We still do that today.

Chall: In the interim, these last thirty or forty years, just prior to World War II, was the Jewish community fairly stable? That is, not too many new people would come in, and not too many old families would leave.

Kleiner: There wasn't very much being so close to Seattle. Quite a few refugees came in. Some settled in Tacoma and the majority of the others settled in
Seattle. The ones that came to Tacoma, quite a few of them were professional men. Some were accountants, and some were in the lumbering industry back home. Quite a percentage of them were hard to place in any kind of work. They were not used to labor as such, and for a while it was hard to keep them as part of the community. They didn't know the language and so on, but slowly they got absorbed by the community.

Aside from the refugees, though, the people whose names you mentioned, I remember growing up with, which I guess means that they stayed in the community all their lives.

Yes, very few of them moved. The younger group went to the University of Washington (Seattle), naturally. Some of them, their parents, possibly settled in Seattle afterwards.

What about the development of professions? Most of these people were in retail businesses. In the earlier days were there lawyers and doctors or did they come later? Jewish lawyers and doctors?

We didn't get very many of them here in Tacoma because there was very little for them here.

But that has not been true in the last ten years or so. There are more doctors who are Jewish coming into Tacoma?

Oh, yes. We have quite a few here.

And lawyers?

Lawyers are the group that was born and raised in Tacoma, like the Seinfelds [Lester]. Seinfeld and Son [Dennis] are in business now.

Levy?

Yes, Larry Levy is an attorney in town here. [Parents: Ruth Wittenberg Levy of Tacoma and Saul Levy.] Henry Haas is an attorney here. He came to this country from Germany via Hong Kong with his parents as a youth.
Kleiner: There are a number of Jewish doctors, but all except Lester Baskin, who came here as an intern during the thirties, have come within the last decade. His son Michael is a physician in Portland, Oregon. Lucille Feist Hurst's son, Richard, is a surgeon with a practice in Vancouver, Washington.

Chall: In an organization like the B'nai B'rith were there members of the Reform who belonged to B'nai B'rith?

Kleiner: All groups. Membership was about 150 in B'nai B'rith, which was made up of all the religious denominations.

Chall: In some communities they don't usually socialize as much with each other, but in Tacoma, the Orthodox and the Reform people did.

Kleiner: Well, there are really very few so-called Orthodox people left. Most of them, since we amalgamated the two groups into the new Temple Beth El--there is practically no difference.

Chall: I was thinking of the old days when there might have been a difference, but there never really has been?

Kleiner: There never has been. We associated pretty well. The families, who were somebody, mixed pretty much with each other.

Chall: It was just a matter of the ritual, that divided them?

Kleiner: We were always part of both groups although our primary interest was with the Temple Beth Israel. I was an officer or on the board for many, many years, your mother sang in the choir for years, and also was very active with the Temple Sisterhood, with the Council of Jewish Women.

Chall: How is it that one of the Torahs in the Temple Beth Israel (now in Beth El) came from your father to Tacoma?

Kleiner: This was a Torah that belonged in our family for generations, I guess. And sometime after the temple was built--about 1922--he sent the Torah here. It is always used in services in which any member of
March 1, 1974

(The congregation is requested to sit in silent meditation after the organ prelude has begun.)

L'CHO DODI LIKRAS KALOH, P'NAY SHABROS N'KABELOH (26)
Beloved come the bride to meet, the Princess Sabbath let us greet.

BLESSING OF THE SABBATH CANDLES, page 7

KIDDUSH, page 93

ALL JOIN IN SINGING: SHOLOM ALEICHEM

Sholom aleichem malachay ha'shores, malachay elyon Mee melech, malachay hamlocheem, hakodosh boruch hu.
Borachem l'sholom malachay ha-sholom
Borphunee l'sholom malachay ha-sholom
Tsaytechem l'sholom malachay ha-sholom

SABBATH SERVICE FOR THE SECOND SABBATH, page 27. (The Rabbi will be assisted by Herman Kleiner, Larry, Jeffrey and Ronald Heiman)

TORAH SERVICE, page 94

Torah Reading: Exodus 27:20-30:10

PRAYER ON MRS. MORRIS KLEINER'S BIRTHDAY

PRESENTATION

A WOMAN OF VALOR

SERMON

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(over)
Oseh shalom him ro mav, hu ya aseh shalom a ley nu,
val kol Mis-ra el, v'im ru im ru Amen

ADORATION AND KADDISH, page 71

Oleaynu l'shabeach l'adon hakol, loses g'dulch lyotzer b'rayshis,
Shele oschnu k'goay harozos, v'lo somo-nu k'mishpochos ho-adomoh,
shelo som chalkaynu kohem v'gorolaynu k'chol hamonom. Wa-anachnu
kor'im u'mishtachavim u-modim lif-nay melech malachay hamlocheem
hakodosh boruch hu.

The congregation is requested to remain seated until the Kleiner family has
left the sanctuary.

We remember Mrs. Mary Abrams who was laid to rest during the past week
and the yahrzeits of Judith Anne Kleinbart, George Posner, Tillie Lipkin,
Morris Klorfein and Ariel Thal.

THE FAMILY OF MORRIS AND PAULINE KLEINER EXTEND A CORDIAL INVITATION
TO EVERYONE TO ATTEND THE ONEG SHABBAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SERVICE
IN THE SOCIAL HALL.

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

March 7 - Reading of the Megillah - 7:30 P.M.
8 - Special Music Service - 8:00 P.M. Temple DeHirsch Youth Group Singers
10 - PURIM CARNIVAL
Kleiner: our family is involved. Herman's bar mitzvah, the bar mitzvahs of the grandchildren, other special family services.

Chall: How about the development of the Jewish Welfare Fund. Under any name—I am sure it has changed over the years. But has there always been, over the years, some collecting of money by Jews in the community?

Kleiner: Well, we have the United Jewish Appeal, and we have a drive every year. We raise anywhere from $25,000 to $40,000.

Chall: What about the earlier years when this was developing? Has there always been some form of collection?

Kleiner: Before this developed, the different organizations—hospital and asthmatic children's funds—they used to send representatives. They used to go from store to store. As a rule, one of us—whether it was myself or someone in the community—would go with the man or woman to the different groups or different individuals. We would get what money we could—anywhere from $1, $5, $10, $25, and so on.

And slowly as the country developed and the United Jewish Appeal started, all our money goes through the United Jewish Appeal to different hospitals, and asthmatic children's hospitals, and Israel. Before the many collectors would come from groups in New York, and we never knew one from another. We never knew who they were, and we were afraid that most of the money instead of going where it was supposed to, remained with the collectors. So we stopped them from coming.

Chall: Oh, those were the individuals.

Kleiner: Yes, the individual people. Now we are not bothered by anybody. All the money goes into one general fund and it is distributed through the board that we have, into the different groups. Most of it goes to Israel.

Chall: Is any of it kept in the community for education or local needs?
Kleiner: We do not keep much in the community. We used to carry a small amount of money for so-called transient people, who were going from place to place looking for a job or something. They might be stranded here and we would keep them here for a day or two, give them lodging, some food and so forth, and send them on their way. We were not allowed to send them from one city to another. So they would get on a bus and go to Seattle, and Seattle would send them someplace else where they thought that they could be placed and have something for them.

Chall: Does the cemetery receive any money from the Jewish Appeal?

Kleiner: The cemetery, when it first started—we used to possibly give $1500 to keep the cemetery in existence. Since then we have unified our cemetery in the last eight or ten years. I was president in charge of the cemetery for many, many years. We slowly developed it into an institution where people pay dues monthly or yearly; they pay so much to join the cemetery. Anybody who has lived in this town for many, many years and did not join the cemetery association, or did not contribute very much of anything—when they die we make sure that we get it out of them. So we get anywhere from $1,000 to $1,500 to $2,000 from them which covers their dues for many, many years back.

We have on hand possibly $25,000 to $30,000 and most of it is in Israeli bonds which pay interest. We have a man who lives on the property and takes care of the grounds, and we also have a gardening contract and we pay them so much a month.

Chall: Is there any division in the community about the cemetery? Do you have an Orthodox cemetery, a Reform cemetery?

Kleiner: There were two cemeteries, and there still are. But the so-called Orthodox cemetery [Chevra Kadisha] is not used at all anymore. It still is adjoining the Home of Peace cemetery and that has been a hard thing to combine. We could, under law, move the bodies from one cemetery to the other, but we
Kleiner: would have to have permission from the children or grandchildren of the people that are buried there to have their bodies transferred, and that is a hard thing to do. So we just take care of the other place as best we know how without spending too much money on it; and take care of the Home of Peace cemetery only.

Chall: What work has been done here in terms of anti-defamation and Jewish community relations? Has that been an on-going responsibility of somebody from let's say the thirties when Hitler came in? Was that ever a problem in this community?

Kleiner: Well, the Anti-Defamation League has been in existence here for many, many years. There was a problem, there was no disturbance in the open in any way; we knew it existed. And it exists to some degree now too. But the Anti-Defamation League has done a lot of good work, teaching our own people right from wrong. And since the ADL is a national institution here, we have a representative in Seattle who comes in every so often to Tacoma and meets with our group, and meets with the school superintendent. Some of the ADL literature is distributed through the school. I was the head of the thing locally for many, many years.

Chall: What did you do while you were the head of it?

Kleiner: What I did when I was the head of it? We used to call meetings naturally of the different groups here . . .

Chall: What kind of groups?

Kleiner: Through the temple as much as possible. We would invite the different Sunday school groups with their ministers and Sunday school teachers to our Friday night services. And that helped as much as anything, possibly more, for the Christian world to learn more about Jews, because most of them thought that they were not allowed to come to the temple. But our rabbi worked very well with them and they came to the services and stayed for the coffee hour afterwards. And when that is finished, or before they are ready to leave, the rabbi takes them into the temple and explains to them about the
Kleiner: Torah and about everything that they are interested in Jewish life.

Chall: Did you ever have to deal with the newspapers in terms of their editorial policies or letters to the editor?

Kleiner: Yes, in years gone by we have had some differences with the editorial page, but since many, many years back we have had absolutely no trouble. If anything comes in a letter, in the letter column, that sounds a little bit anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish, we take it up with the newspapers and they are more or less careful as to what they take in. So we have had practically no trouble in that respect.

Chall: Has there been difficulty with the schools? Some communities have been concerned about reading Oliver Twist or Shakespeare plays.

Kleiner: The only thing that bothers us about the schools, is the religion in schools. Christmas time especially—a lot of Christmas songs. And the last supper, and the birth of Jesus displays in our county court house which was done away with now. There is very little of it. The law about religion in the school has helped an awful lot although many people are still against it. But I think it has helped keep peace in the community.

Chall: Do you think it is a bad idea to have the creche, the showing of the birth of Christ in the City Hall? Does it make much difference one way or the other if it is there?

Kleiner: Well, it just stirs up the same crucifixion ideas for which the Jew has been blamed for generations back. They have never proven that the Jew had anything to do with it, but at the same time a lot of churches still bring their younger generation up in a way that makes them think that we had something to do with it. Our Pope now, and also Pope John, possibly, has done more than any other Pope to better the understanding between the different religious groups—especially Catholics and Jews.

Chall: So really, it is a matter of leadership more than anything else. What about the Jews over the years
joining the private clubs? The Moose, the Elks, and the country club—have they been allowed in or not?

Well, as far as the country club is concerned, the Jew has been kept out of it. As far as the clubs are concerned, Rotary, Kiwanis or any of those, the Jew has had the same privilege to join as anybody else.

For years we had trouble with the Elks Lodge. It would only take one or two blackballs to reject. There was a group in the Elks Club who used to blackball nearly every Jew who wanted to join the Elks Club. I joined the Elks Club a little over fifty years ago and so did my brother Leon. And after we joined we brought some pressure to bear on some of the leaders in the community, some of the judges who were members and so on, and we changed the whole procedure there. Nearly every Jew has joined the Elks Club because they can play golf there, they can use the swimming pool, they can use the dining room, or anything. It has been a wonderful institution; we have 11,000 members in the Elks Club now in Tacoma.

So if Jews now want to join, they probably can?

As a matter of fact some of the Jews have already dropped out because they think that there is too much anti-feeling in the Elks against the Negro.

When you say you changed the procedures about . . .

Well, it is not exactly the procedures. The procedures are the same except that the group that was known to be anti-Semitic and anti-Jews were talked to. They discontinued their blackball.

And now many people are trying to get blacks into the Elks?

They are trying to get blacks which will be a fight. Whether they eventually will be permitted to join is a question. They have their own Masonic Lodges and they have their own Elks Clubs and so on, and no white man belongs to those either. It will slowly--
Kleiner: the time will come--because not only the Elks, the Moose are having the same trouble, the Odd Fellows and so on.

Chall: Has it ever been your feeling that there should be pressure put on the country club to admit Jews, or would you just as soon not bother with that?

Kleiner: I don't think it would be necessary for the Jews to join. In Seattle, for instance, they have their own Jewish clubs where they have gentile members. Not very many, because they haven't got room for many more members than they have now. But they have some Christians among them.

Chall: So do I take it that you probably never felt alienated in this country by reason of the fact that you were either a foreigner or a Jew? You felt comfortable living in Tacoma, let's say, in the United States.

Kleiner: Well, I have had no trouble, here or when I lived in Canada. I have had no trouble. I didn't feel it. I have had no trouble here in Tacoma and I have lived here about fifty-four to fifty-five years. I never felt any feelings against me or any of my children. I feel at home.

Chall: So what does being an American citizen mean to you, having come here as a stranger not sure of what you would find?

Kleiner: Well, I found freedom in Canada. I found freedom of expression, and freedom of religion, and freedom of living a free life as any human being should.

Politics

Chall: What about politics? After you became a citizen, did you always take an interest in local and national politics?

Kleiner: Yes, I took an interest in local affairs. In fact,
Kleiner: I ran for city council here one year and lost out, but I got five or six thousand votes which was very good for me. I would never try again, once was enough.

Chall: Did you help other candidates over the years for various positions?

Kleiner: I don't know just why we were more or less inclined to the Democratic point of view, whatever that means, and voted for the Democrats in power within state and federal elections. We found it possibly a little more to our liking than the Republicans. Same with state politics. We don't go out openly boosting anybody, but we try to work for what we think is best for the community.

Chall: And in the city?

Kleiner: In the city and the state.

Grandchildren, Scholarship Fund

Chall: What about your grandchildren, is there any generation gap there?

Kleiner: As far as the grandchildren are concerned, I think we possibly have a better relationship with the six of them who live in Tacoma than with the two who are in California because we are closer to them. We see them oftener, and regardless of their long hair and beards, we have no hard feelings between us.

Chall: Is there anything else for the record that I have left out?

Kleiner: Let's see, we were going to put something in about the scholarship. Herman joined the army during the Second World War. He graduated from the University of Puget Sound and he left before he got his diploma [1943]. So his mother and I went to the college when the diplomas were being issued and got Herman's.
Kleiner: After he came back we set up a scholarship award in 1946, of $250 a year to any boy or girl, regardless of race or color, who contributes to a better understanding between all religious and ethnic groups. This has been going on now ever since the Second World War. Awards have been given to colored people and to women and men every year.

Herman, the university director, and some of the teachers get together and out of the group that has been selected, pick out one who should get it.

Chall: Who makes the general selection, the first screening?

Kleiner: The first screening is by the professors, by the teachers.

Chall: So there probably would be about thirty of these awards by now. And they are always seniors graduating?

Kleiner: That's right.

Chall: What is it called?

Kleiner: The Herman Kleiner Brotherhood Award.

Chall: Is that becoming a fairly coveted award? It means something to those who get it?

Kleiner: Oh, yes. People look for it. On some awards your name is printed on a statue of some kind; this is actually money which the youngsters need more than anything else.

Chall: Are the names put on any kind of a plaque in the college?

Kleiner: Yes, they are. And that same day there are awards being given by the Elks, and by the Kiwanis, and many other groups, but this one is very much appreciated by the university.
APPENDIX
Mr. and Mrs. A. Kleiner Come from European Home to Spend Summer with Sons, Morris, Leon, and Simon Kleiner.

Snaped at the Kleiner Summer Home Father and Son Reunited After Twenty Years.


distinguished Europeans are introduced to Tacoma

When anything in Tacoma’s Jewish community needs to be done Morris Kleiner is first consulted. If a project is not getting the support it should be asked for moral support, always gives it in abundance with any other support that is needed, generously mixed in. He has been an officer in almost every Jewish organization in Tacoma,—usually when that organization is in its first tender years and requires a leader of stalwart heart and energetic will to build it up. There is no failing to anything which he attempts for Mr. Kleiner is blessed with a quality of conscientiousness that will not allow him to do anything half way.

This is not intended, however, to be his story but that of his parents, Avrum and Clara Kleiner, who have come from Tarnopol, Poland, to visit with their three sons, Morris, Leon and Simon. They had not seen their son, Morris, for almost twenty years, when after graduating from “Gymnasium” he left with his uncle, Henry N. Sereth, visiting from America then, to enter the lumber business in Calgary, Alberta. Fifteen years ago he came to Tacoma. Leon, the youngest son, came a few years after Morris. Simon went through all the horrors of the World War with the Austrian army to return home and find that the huge farm which he shared with his father was no longer theirs. He joined his brothers in Tacoma to begin a new life.

When the two old folks got off the train after their long journey to Tacoma, Morris and Leon met them almost as strangers, but Simon who had seen them last would know them immediately. Avrum Kleiner was easily distinguished as a foreign gentleman with his “Kaiser Wilhelm” moustache, the formal cane and derby. The mother with her bobbed hair and modish clothes was no less American looking than any other young looking American mother. But then came the trouble of language. The boys had forgotten the Polish in which they had conversed at home or the Yiddish they had picked up here. “How is it you have not learned English?” asked the arrogant American sons. The mother, who had taught school at one time, apologized. She could speak fluently in French and German as well as Polish and Yiddish, but she was sorry she had not learned English.

The visitors have enjoyed the most glorious summer that Puget Sound has ever had at the country home of the Morris Kleiner’s at Harbor Heights, Vashon Island. Their three grandchildren, Malka, Herman and Josefine, have learned a little Polish while the old folks have picked up English words. Papa Kleiner’s moustaches, through insidious trimmings by his son Morris, have gradually been clipped till now he has only an Anglicized brush. He vows it must be grown back before he can return to his old cronies in Europe.

It was the hope of the sons to keep their parents here for the remaining years, but the old folks are anxious to return. They are happy that they have been able to make the trip and see their children, but their home is not here they feel. They have met for the first time their daughters-in-law, Pauline, Morris’ wife, and Esther, the wife of Leon. A real thrill of reunion was that which brought together Mr. Kleiner with his sister Rosa Kleiner Sereth, and her husband, Henry N. Sereth, whom he had not seen for twenty-five years. Mr. and Mrs. Kleiner, who are now at the Tacoma home of their son, are planning to leave immediately after Yom Kippur for New York, from where they will sail on the 10th of November for Europe.

Joys and sorrows of a life time have formed too strong a tie to the soil of their old home. Mr. Kleiner had been a prosperous farmer at Bellavista before the Great War. This was a part of Austrian-Poland that saw the most terrific fighting. The territory changed hands half a dozen times, was now Russian, now Austrian. They saw their stock taken, their land made worthless through neglect and the desecration of war. They barricaded themselves in their house with the little hoard of supplies which they had. With their youngest child, an only daughter, Toncha, they lived thus. Three sons were serving in the Austrian army, Simon, Bernard and Isaac. They were thankful that two, Morris and Leon, were in America. Seeing their stock and their land disappear was bad enough, but when they had to witness tortures perpetrated on lifetime neighbors and friends, and gradually, brutal soldiers closing in upon them they were forced to desert the remainder of the things for which they had labored a lifetime. They joined relatives in Vienna where they stayed till the war was over.

The son Isaac, who before the war had begun a brilliant career as an attorney, has never returned, nor was anything learned of his fate. Bernard, a practicing pharmacist, and the daughter, Toncha, now have families of their own and are still living in Tarnopol. Tarnopol is the largest city near the old home of the Kleiners. Too much of their life has been spent there to make it possible for any other land to be their home.

Parents and children have rejoiced at having these few months together. The family life for all of them has been made more beautiful because of this reunion.
Ex-Soviet Slave Laborer Rejoices In Tacoma Reunion With Brothers

By ROD CARDWELL

The place: Siberia, 1940.

Deportee Poles, all ages, all professions, spend the endless days hacking trees from the forest that fences their forced labor camp. They live 149 to a barrack.

They barely exist on a diet that seldom changes from tough black bread and boiled water.

The Soviet guards call the water "tea."

A wonderful event is the infrequent appearances of horse meat.

Fights break out over extra pieces.

And the woman named Antonia Kleiner Garbarski wields an ax beside her husband. She struggles for her health. She protects her 12-year-old son, Eugene, also made to chop the trees.

She thinks of her three brothers in their far-away dream world, in a city called Tacoma. But she never loses hope.

Forty months she endures the privation, through a blazing Siberian summer, a fiercely freezing winter.

She refuses the offer of a makeshift operation on her arm, infected from a nutritional disease that it seethes with boils and turns blue.

Mrs. Garbarski still has her arm. The scar it bears is worn on limbs and bodies of others throughout the world, a souvenir of Siberia.

Today, nearly 18 years to the month the Communists dragged her from eastern Poland in a cattle car, she can recall the ordeal with a smile, with jokes accompanied by healthy, appealing laughter.

This is the first Sunday in her reunion visit here with brothers Morris, Leon and Simon Kleiner. It is the first time they have been together as a family in nearly 50 years.

The meeting with Leon on her arrival last week was the first since he left Poland for America 46 years ago.

As she sat on the patio of Morris' home yesterday, each brother walked up and kissed her.

"Antonia, speaking good English but with a distinct Polish accent, exclaimed: "This is the happiest moment in my life. I still can't believe it is true. I walk like in a dream."

European Polite

She has the European woman's poise. Her neatly groomed hair is just turning gray. Her expressive eyes tell more than the smiles and unemotional account of life as a slave laborer.

She fled the Nazis in 1939 only to end up a Soviet captive. Friends smuggled bread and toast to her as she and 59 others huddled 24 hours in a sealed cattle car, waiting for the train to Siberia.

The Poles were freed from their wilderness camp after Germany attacked Russia. But they were not allowed outside the Soviet Union.

She sold her few pieces of jewelry for food. The rubles she got for $100 from her brother bought 16 pounds of black flour, one pound of fat ("maybe dog fat") and one pound of meat.

Permission to leave the USSR came when her husband and son went into Polish military service. Her fate as a refugee took her to Iran, Palestine, England and back to Palestine as it fought to become Israel. Then she went to Italy and, once more, England, now her permanent home.

Before reaching Tacoma, she visited his Texan wife in Los Angeles. He became a U.S. citizen as a soldier in Korea.

"I still can't realize this is possible," she said. "My lifetime stood by to assure it was real."

(Continued on Page Four)

REUNION BY WAY OF SIBERIA—For the first time in nearly 50 years, the Polish-born Kleiner brothers of Tacoma and their sister, Mrs. Antonia Garbarski, who spent 18 months in a Siberian labor camp, are together here as a family. Recalling memories evoked by a childhood album, the brothers are, from left, Leon, Morris (standing) and Simon. Mrs. Garbarski, victim of the Nazis and Communists, calls the reunion a "dream."—News Tribune staff photo.

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BORN IN AUSTRIAN POLAND

Kleiner had a favorite among the candidates in the latest Tacoma elections. He plugged for Harold Moss, the only black aspirant for the City Council:

"I like Harold. I had hopes he would get in, but he didn't make it. I thought he would be good for the city."

Born in the part of Poland ruled by Austria before the First World War, Kleiner made his way to Canada in 1907...at the age of 17.

He left behind a land that was soon to be engulfed in terror:

"The Russians came and took everything they could get their hands on. There was a lot of fighting done right where I went to school."

On a wall of the Kleiner home hangs a class picture from his youth. (He is shown as a handsome teen-ager with a moustache.) Most of his fellow students, he learned, were killed in the "war to end all wars."

And a quarter of a century later many of his relatives died in Nazi gas chambers.

He has revisited Europe...but avoided Germany and Communist Poland:

"I wouldn't spend any money in those places."

As an ambitious, young arrival in Calgary, Alta., he attended school to learn English...and worked for an uncle in the lumber business. He earned a dollar a day and became a Canadian citizen:

"But his best chances as a lumberman, he decided, lay in the United States."

He moved across the border in 1915. Canada, like England, was at war...and needed the timber that could be shipped from Puget Sound.

MARRIED 50 YEARS

Kleiner worked in Bellingham briefly...and arrived in Tacoma to buy the Liberty Lumber Co.

"That was at South 41st and M streets. There's a clinic now where it used to be...It was a three-story building with two teams of horses downstairs and an apartment over the office," he recalls.

He and Paulene, his Montreal-born wife, have been married 50 years. They became American citizens in the 1920s...and raised a son and two daughters.

Kleiner referred to the early days in a statement he issued as a City Council candidate (unsuccessful) in 1953:

"I came to Tacoma 36 years ago and my first job was delivering wood in partnership with a team of horses."

He is semi-retired as owner emeritus of Model Lumber...and spends a part of each day caring for the swans and ducks that swim in the spring-fed pond behind his North End home.

And he keeps track of his grandchildren's activities...and continues to serve as a Kiwanian and a member of the Tacoma Boys Club Board of Directors:

"I think the boys' clubs are a necessity. The more we have the less trouble we'll have with the young group...They don't get as much guidance at home as we used to give them...It's the same all over the world."

And Mrs. Kleiner, a warm, striking woman with silver hair, confides:

"That honey that Morris gives away—he orders it from California...but some people really think he raises bees at the lumber yard."
We live in what most people would consider to be a well kept house, with equally well kept grounds. Yet, I've never known it to fail; on every occasion that my grandparents drive up, in their clean, white Cadillac (which could be at any hour, any day of the week) our house will suddenly be viewed through a critical lens. MY grandfather and ONLY my grandfather will be the one who drives up to the parking strip, slides out of his clean, white Cadillac, and is immediately hit in the head with a branch from a Japanese cherry tree. In a slightly tinged Polish accent he will mumble: "God Damned Tree!" -- and cut off the offensive branch with one swish from his pocket knife.

Crossing the lawn to our house, he will pick up a total of four rocks, twenty clippings of uncut grass from the sidewalk, nine popsicle sticks, and two gum wrappers. All these articles he will throw into the street with a flourish. As he makes his way slowly up the front steps, he will soon notice that the railing is a wee bit shakey. "We're going to have that repaired, uh, aren't we Kenny?", says Mom.

Once seated in the living room my grandfather will make polite comments about the cat and dog hair on the rug, the dust on the sixth shelf of the bookcase, and my tight pants.

They must leave soon because Grandfather has acquired asthma from the cat hair; he makes some wry comment about the paper and popsicle sticks in the street, and drives away. After they are gone, we mentally begin to question how anybody could possibly expect anybody else to be soooo outstandingly perfect. But, then we see their house, and all doubts are expelled! Their huge lawn looks as if it had been trimmed with a scissors! Every shrub is clipped to a point somewhere past unbelievable! In the back yard there is a pool containing two white swans --- EVERY FEATHER IN PLACE!

One room in their home is completely blanketed with photographs; photographs of aunts, uncles, grandchildren, old homes, old dogs, and old memories. Memories of the early years in Poland, of losing friends and relatives in concentration camps, the death of his brother; mixed with the memories of half a century of marriage, raising three children, re-raising eight more grandsons, plus an uncountable number of perfect swans. Memories of starting and still operating one of the finest lumber yards in the city, memories and pride at being on the board of directors of an infinite number of youth and service clubs. Memories of a life in which words like shame and regret are not known; where kindness, generosity, success, and perhaps "fussiness" are shown front row, center!

(Written by Larry at age 15)
Relatives who were Brought out of Europe Between 1938 and 1947

H. N. Sereth, from the early 1930s, by which time he was retired from business, until his death in 1944 at the age of eighty, devoted considerable time to locating relatives in Europe in order to rescue them from Hitler. He searched; Morris Kleiner signed affidavits and guaranteed support. The following relatives came to the United States. Most of them settled in Seattle.

1938 Fritz and Olga Kagan (Vienna). He was a distant relative of Malca Greenfield Kleiner (Morris's mother). Lived in Brooklyn.

1938 Erna Fell (Vienna). She is the daughter of Jacob Fell, related to Jacob Kleiner's wife, whose maiden name was Fell (Morris's grandmother). She came as a teen-aged girl, about eighteen; lived for a while in Tacoma, then Seattle. Now Mrs. Samuel Wilson, she lives in Palo Alto, California.

5/10/1939 Elsa Kleiner Brown (Vienna).

10/18/1940 Sophie (Fifi) Kleiner Lister and Bruno Lister (Vienna). They are the daughters of Ignatz, brother of Adolf Kleiner (Morris's father). Ignatz achieved fame as the engineer who supervised the building of the dam on the Danube River and was awarded a medal by Kaiser Franz Joseph in about 1903.

c. 1940 Charlotte (Lotta) Gottesman Rutter (Grzymalow, Poland). She is the daughter of Gusti Kleiner Gottesman, sister of Adolf. Her husband, a physician, died a few years after their arrival in the United States. Lives in Seattle.
1971

Roselle Gottesman Kesler (sister of Charlotte) survived the war in Europe. She emigrated from her home in Czechoslovakia to join her sister in Seattle during the latter's illness, and was permitted to remain in the United States.

1947

Jack and Lola Teitelbaum (Eberfell, Germany). He was the son of Morris Teitelbaum, Morris Kleiner's first cousin (with whom he had stayed while en route to Canada). Morris Teitelbaum's mother was Cecile Kleiner, sister of Adolf.

Jack and Lola survived the war, each in separate concentration camps. After a brief period in Tacoma managing a small antique shop, they moved to New York.
DIARY OF HENRY NOAH SERETH (1864-1944)

Written between 1900 and 1905, while he struggled to earn a living and establish an economic base in the United States after leaving his native Poland (Galicia). Translated from the German by Elsa Kleiner Brown, 1974.

I left Lemberg May 5th by train at 10:00 at night from Kracow with my brother Alexander. We arrived in London May 10th and stayed till the 16th leaving there at 12 p.m., arriving at Liverpool the next morning. We bought tickets at a travel office for Montreal and left on the Cunian Line ship, third class, tickets costing 5L 85/-.

We landed in Montreal May 27th and stayed at the depot for the night. We got a room at Hoffmans, coffee and room for 75c a night or $3.50 a week.

May 28, 1900:

Today I saw "sonenfinstern", eclipse of the sun. The people in Montreal speak only French, even the farmers.

In the week in London we saw the son-in-law of Mr. Herson and there we met a Mr. Klapper, formerly of Lemberg. He seemed to be a very nice man and found a room for us at Mr. Berger's where we stayed for seven days. Mr. Berger was born in Polin close to Kracow. He lives now in London for seven years and earns his living there. We looked around London but found that people worked very hard there, especially the newcomers. Those who could not make a living there went to America. The climate in London is not good. Some of the Jews could make a living here if they could talk English. The rooms look there like in Galicia--dirty and poor.

When we boarded the ship at Liverpool we met 24 families from Galicia. There was one lady from Blinca. They were all going to Canada to buy land there--Winnipeg. Most of them planned to work one or two years hoping to earn enough to buy land. The farmers were treated badly by the ship's crew.
May 29: We left Montreal in the morning and arrived in Burlington, Vermont at noon. This is a city of 24,000 with members of all nations. There are about 100 Jews here, mostly traders. They ride around in the country with hardware like pots and pans which they trade for old junk. They struggle and are poor. I have never seen such a pretty town. One hotel is more elegant than the other. Almost each home has its own garden with trees and flowers. On this account the town is big and looks like a resort place. It is restricted on the lake. The city has an electric streetcar and electric lights. It is very clean and all in all looks like the Garden of Eden.

In Burlington we stayed in a boarding house. We bought a horse and wagon for $65.50 and merchandise for $50, shirts, stockings, etc. Alexander and the horse went on a trip. I moved to Mr. Choders. He is from Ostroy and seems to be very nice. He is a peddler in this country.

Alexander wrote to Dr. Ostarzowsky that he should send him 500 gulden which he had left with him. I will see what I will do now. I think that I will look for work and I will learn English.

June 4: Till today I have not heard from my dear Rachel. I hope I will hear tomorrow. I worry for dear Sophie because she is alone in Lemberg with Mrs. Schatsker. I do not know if anyone has sent money to Mrs. Schatsker. I will stay in America till I have enough money. I think $3,000 will be enough. Then, God willing I will go via San Francisco, west to Vladivostock, to Port Arthur, and to Siberia. I hope that I will do business there. Man plans but God does it different—a Russian proverb.

June 5: Today I received the first letter from Rachel from Biliternced, which I answered right away. I wrote to Mrs. Schatsker for Sophie. I got two letters from my brother which I did not answer.

June 6: Today I went to work. My business is peddling with old things, like iron and rags. It is very hard work and I have to listen to many bad words from the boss, who came from Litauen where he was a driver of a wagon with a horse. I earned $4 for six days. It is
ridiculous. I laugh too, but it is too bad when I have no money. This man is very much praised and he and I were invited to the Rabbi Sachs for tea in the evening. I have no suit. I have to learn English. I have hired a young student as a teacher who will come in the evenings to teach me English.

**June 10:** The work is much easier now. I am satisfied now to be away from the poor land Galicia.

**June 11:** I try to get in touch with businessmen with paper, old iron and other old things. All stores are good here because everybody will earn much money.

**June 14:** Alexander and Rauer came back from the country but made very bad business. They will wait till the money from Galicia comes, then they will go back home. I worked for $6 for six days and now I am without work as there is not enough to do for the steady people. I paid for room and board, laundry, and tobacco, and stamps. I took some hardware from Alexander and went from house to house with it but did not sell anything. I was very sad.

**July 2:** We moved from Burlington into a boarding house. I do not understand Alexander. Everyday he says something else. One day he wants to go back to Europe, the other day he stays in the U.S. again. As long as I could not get any work in Burlington and owed the rent already, so I decided to go to work for a farmer to be able to pay for what I owe. After I had a hard time with Alexander he gave me $2.50. I paid my teacher then I bought two pants with vest for work for $40. Then I drove with the tramway to the depot and went with a letter of introduction to a Dr. A.K. Ellsworth in North Cambridge, Vt. I took a job for $5 a week with room and board as a farm worker. I left Burlington with a very heavy heart. To say goodbye to the brother was very hard.

The doctor for whom I am now working is a very simple learned peasant, a dentist. He has two horses, two cows, and a 150-acre field. I started the first day at 6:00 in the morning. I had to clean the stables, and cut wood, and pile it. He did not help me, only milked the cows. The first few days I was very tired and I am not used to the food they serve here.
Sunday
July 10: I wrote letters to Rossia (Rachel), to father-in-law and to my father. I ordered some newspapers and dictionaries. Monday I wrote to people who write in the paper that they have fields for sale. I offered myself as an administrator, as an employee to sell to the farmers from Galicia, they should send me a train ticket to Chicago.

On this day Alexander went back home from New York via Bremen or Hamburg. I wrote to the Burlington P.O. to forward my mail to North Cambridge. Through the Armousin (?) Bureau, a Mr. R. P. Tillman in Boston, Mass. I sent an advertisement to the Winnipeg paper: "It is important for companies for colonization of big tracts of land. One man offers his services. He is a businessman who landed in this country two months ago, speaks and writes in perfect German, Russian, Ruthenian, and Polish; can communicate in all Slavic languages and in English in word and writing. To take over big tracts of land to colonise with Ruthenians who come from Galicia, Austria and with whom he is in direct communication and is trusted by them. He guarantees his success. Write for more information to Mr. N. Sereth, North Cambridge, Vt."

Now I will wait for an answer and see what will come of it. I sent the letter to Mr. Tillman on 7-20. I do not know how much money I will have to pay for it. I do not know what I shall do if I get a letter to come there as the trains are very expensive. There is no work in North Cambridge for me to earn enough. So far it is nice here. I have a nice bedroom and a room where I can study. I get up at 5:00 to study English; work for a short time, and study again for two hours. At 7:00 in the morning I have my breakfast and work till noon and then again from 1 o'clock until 6:00. After eating I study.

I am curious what the answer from my father-in-law Jacob Kleiner will be.

August 6: I got a letter from Alexander I should come home. He is ashamed that he came home alone.

August 8: Received from my father Sophie's report cards from school which I sent to Rachel with a letter.

I talked with my boss. I will work just in the
afternoons, from 1 o'clock until 6:00. In the forenoon I will learn English to speak and write. For the work I will earn $8 a week and I guess I will stay here till September.

Sept. 20: Today I will go to Burlington for the holidays, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. I learned a little English from the book Plato Reissness and practiced talking to people. I saved $8.50 which I owe to Mr. Chadock. I need shoes and a coat for winter. I hope to get a ticket free for the trip to Chicago or to Manitoba. I did not decide yet what I will do. I have so many ideas; I did not make up my mind what is best.

Oct. 10: I did not have money to buy a seat for the holidays but Rabbi Shadin gave me a billet. I prayed there. I thought I would like to open here a lumber mill. I wrote to Mr. William Richard & Son at Cullman. They wrote and sent no ticket. Now I do not have a suitcase where to pack my things. Alexander took my suitcase when he left for home. I borrowed $5 and bought a suitcase for $2.50. Now I leave Burlington with $2. I stayed with Mr. Chadock from September 20 till October 10, the second day of Sukkoth. Where I will be for the last holidays I do not know yet. Today I got a letter from Dr. Ellsworth that I should come back to him and stay over the winter. I could study English there again. Also I received a letter from my sister in Zbarash with wishes for the holidays. Alexander did not write.

No date: I left Burlington at 10 o'clock in the evening and came to Troy, N.Y., Friday at 3:00 a.m. and stayed at the depot till 6:30. I went to the synagogue to pray and then to see Rabbi Lasker with the letter from the Rabbi in Burlington. I received a slip for breakfast and $1 for the trip to Albany. I did the same in Albany and took the train to Utica, N.Y., arriving at 6:00 p.m. I took a room at the Hotel Gennesse for 50¢ and had dinner with beer for 30¢, and went to bed. I couldn't sleep because every 15 minutes a train went by. In the morning I went to synagogue to pray and there a man invited me for lunch. I went from there to Syracuse, N.Y., arriving there that evening. In the morning I will go to the synagogue. I owe $8.50 to Mr. Chadock from Burlington.

(The area) In Troy there are 500 Jews; in Albany 800
Jews, and in Utica 500 Jews. Utica has 50,000 inhabitants and Syracuse has 150,000. The Jews in Troy are mostly traders and there are very few rich Jews. In Albany most of the Jews are tailors. I guess they make good money. There is a beautiful synagogue in Albany, mostly Reform Jews. In Troy they are Orthodox. Utica has Orthodox Jews, not very rich. Most of them are traders. In Utica I have met a few Jews from Poland -- workers, and some from Tarnov; most of the Jews from Litauen and a few from Austria and Hungary.

Before I left Burlington I received three letters. I will write to Rachel, to my sister and Uncle Sicher. I got three letters from Rachel, one from Solomon with news about Cecile and Sophie, and greetings from them. I was pleased to hear about them. I am very angry that I cannot learn English on the trip but I learn from listening and talking.

Oct. 14: Syracuse. I went to the synagogue for morning prayer and was welcomed there with Kibid before and after the prayer. I went to the president for breakfast, also getting a ticket to Rochester. There I got a room for the Holidays and a ticket for Buffalo, and on October 15 to Erie.

Oct. 16: I took the electric train to Niagara Falls (95¢ round trip) and I cannot tell enough how beautiful is nature with these three great falls. It is as they say: See Niagara Falls and die. I wonder if I will ever see these Falls again. Rochester too has waterfalls on the Hudson River but it is as nothing against the Niagara Falls. That evening I went to Cleveland and with my last money paid 50¢ for a hotel room and bought food for the evening meal and breakfast. In the morning I went to the synagogue and the committee provided me with a ticket to Columbus, Ohio where I arrived on October 19 without money. I sold my wallet for 50¢ and found a room for the night for 25¢.

Oct. 20: In the morning to a pawn broker store and sold my little tallis and a magnifying glass. When I will have money I will buy it back. I took the train in the evening and arrived in Cincinnati on October 22. In the morning I went to the president of the Orthodox committee and was provided for for two days with $1.35 to go to Cullman, Alabama.
Oct. 29

Cullman, Alabama. I have seen the country with the son of Mr. Rich who drove me around. I visited the farmers and saw the forests. The climate here is very good with the air from the south. If I will be lucky and make enough money I would like to live here. The lumber is very good here. There are saw-mills in the neighborhood. The farmers are poor. I came here with 75$, stayed in the hotel for three nights and I have to pay $3.50 for room and board. I do not like to stay here so I sold my black coat with vest, paid and have 75$ left and a ticket to Cincinnati.

I think I will just go to Louisville, Ky. and there I will try to get a ticket to Memphis, Tenn. I hope to get some work there as a lumber man and earn some money to go to the prairies or Chicago. It is hard to travel in this world without some money in the pocket. If I went home I do not know what I should do there. If nothing will come out of it I will go Vladivostok and home. Maybe it will be better there and I have learned enough to make my own business at home. I can get goods from America for Galicia.

I do not know what will happen to me, Rachel and the children. Just God will know. One man cannot know it. I am too ashamed to go home. A man makes many errors in his life, but I cannot help it.

Nov. 11: Cincinnati. Arrived here November 2 after stopping in Louisville between trains. I was helped for a couple of days by the Ochous organization and on Monday introduced to a Mr. Tennenbaum who owns a furniture store. I started work there and for three days I earned $3.60. Today I wrote a letter to Rachel to Gzymalov where she stays with her sister Fanny Seiden. I wrote to my brother Solomon too because I am worried I did not hear from Rachel. I think she must have borne the child now. I wonder if it is a boy or a girl and how Rachel and the baby are. I did not hear from the children in Zbaraz. I heard from Faebus Teitelbaum last month that Cecile was brought to him to Tarnopol. I did not hear anything for a month from home. I am still working. I do not know what the end will be. I am too tired after ten hours work to study English.
Nov. 21: I received a letter from dear Rachel, written to Cullman. She wrote that she gave birth to a girl, October 27, 1900, but what is the name of the fifth daughter. I wish this fifth daughter will bring us luck. I wrote to dear Rachel that I am now working in a liquor store and earn $7.20 a week.

Dec. 12: I moved to a new place close to where I work for $1.25 a week. The wife of Mr. Bauer cooks dinner for me. I sent $3.50 to the pawnbroker at Cullman to return my coat to me. I sent $27.30 to Berlin to Professor J. Langezehrt to send me his English-German dictionary and grammar. I have $10 in my pocket.

Today I had a letter from Rachel and one from Esther from Zbaraz. I am worried about Sophie. I think I may go to Siberia, via Mandruse, Port Arthur and Vladivostok if possible in the spring, if I will not get any better jobs. I will send $10 to Rachel which I will miss but what can I do?

Feb. 17, 1901: Yesterday I received two letters from Rachel. I was sorry to hear that Leicia, Adolf Kleiner's wife passed away and I am sorry that Sophie is suffering from a rash and Cecile is ill. I hope that they will be better soon. I work the same hours as before; get up at 4:00 a.m. to learn English.

Feb. 22: I got my envelope with the money but they wrote me they thank me for my services but they have to let me go. There is no business between Christmas and Easter. I could not make up my mind if I should go to learn how to make cigars or make dresses. So I wrote a letter to the Jewish Charities: "I wish I could write to you of my struggles here in the English language, which I am studying, but I think I am not able yet to do it. You therefore permit me to write this letter in German." I wrote them everything that has happened to me since I arrived in America. I would come to see them Sunday, which I did. A Mr. Bethmer had my letter. He said: "Your case is very difficult. It is hard for an educated man who is not used to work with his hands. I will write to some lumber traders in New York and Chicago and I hope you will find some work there." He sent me to someone else to talk about what I knew of the lumber business. I wonder what will happen now.
Mar. 14: I got the answer from New York that they have no work for me and they take no one from Europe. So far I did not hear from Chicago. I have only 15% left. Mr. Bethner asked me if I have money to wait a few days longer. I do not want to take money from the Relief Committee. I like it better to work and earn something.

In the meantime I did not have any news from Solomon. I would like to send him $5 to take Sophie to the doctor. It is hard to see the future. If there is a God why does he not help me? Do I not deserve it?

Mar. 23: Mr. Bethner got me a job to work in a cigar factory in the warehouse. I had to move heavy crates. The foreman said they were too heavy for me and I should quit the job. I asked him to let me stay on. On my way home from work I met the superintendent from Fletcher & Co. and he asked me if I had found work. He said he noticed that I am quite a business man. When I came home I found a note there, that I should go tomorrow to the Hebrew Charity that there was a letter for me from Chicago. I should come to Chicago on March 27th. I will get a letter and ticket. I will go to a lumber trader and work in his store. Monday and Tuesday I will work so I will have some money. I got a letter from Rachel and will write her from Chicago.

Mar. 27: I went to the Jewish Charity and got the letter to the firm of E. Sondheimer and Sons, Blue Island, Ill. There was a train ticket and $2. I paid my debts and left with $3.20.

Mar. 28: I had trouble finding the company because the letter had the wrong address. When I got there I was told to come at 7:00 the next morning. When I got there Mr. Sondheimer was not there but a Mr. Silver said when he looked at me that he could see I would be unable to do the heavy work of piling lumber and I should come Monday and he would put me to measuring boards. If I get the job I will be able to send 50 to 60 gulden to Rachel. I would be lucky with that. So far I don't have much money to wait for Monday. I looked for a pawnbroker to put my black coat there for a little money. I went from one to the other but could not find any who would take the coat. I was very sad. It is hard to be alone here and the family is alone in Galicia.
Mar. 31: I took a room for $1.25 a week and started to work measuring lumber. The foreman is a German. I worked there Monday and Tuesday but when I went on Wednesday I was told there was no work for me. I said I would wait till Mr. Silver came in. I reminded Mr. Silver that he had promised me work and so he said if I could do the hard work I could come back the next day. I did, but I cannot go on living this way. I do not know what I shall do and what will become of my wife and children. Today is a holiday and it is still better than a year ago in Lemberg. Rachel went to Bilitovka to her parents and got 50 gulden from her mother. What am I now—self contained and solitary as an oyster.

Apr. 4: I worked five days this week and the work is very hard. I am told if I keep on for four or five weeks I will know more about the business. Tomorrow I will get $8.50. I would like to send away for some books that would help me to learn more about the lumber business here. I need a suit and some other things. In my last letter to Rachel I promised her some money. The first of May it will be a year that I said goodbye to Rachel and the children at the train depot in Lemberg.

Apr. 14: Chicago. I work very hard piling lumber. Such kind of work I never wished to a peasant. Tuesday I heard the boss ask the foreman why he did not have me measure the lumber instead and was answered that I did not know how to do it right. So I worked hard as always. I have lost weight from the hard work and I am very tired when I come home. I hope it will get better very soon and that I may have pleasure and good health and prosperity after all this.

May 5: It is a year today that I left Lemberg. I have made little progress. To come back home, I think about it. No money, no credit. I came to America to do it better, and now should I go home with nothing? I am ashamed to do this. I have to try to make it right and if it does not go, I go to Siberia. I still hope God will help me. The end of my first year in America.

May 12: Today I heard from Rachel that she has a room for herself with the three little children. Her mother gives her 15 gulden a month and a cow to milk. I am glad that she and the children are in good health but I did not hear anything from Sophie and Cecile.
May 15: I heard from my brother Solomon, and from Sophie, and Cecile who enclosed greetings. They would long to be with their mother and their sisters. Their report cards are good; they study religion, French, German, singing, and needlework. Sophie did not do well in the needlework and Cecile got good marks for that and singing. It is my biggest wish that we could be together. I work like a peasant. I do not know how to find anything better. Poor Rachel is waiting for good news from me. The holidays are next week and I will take days off.

The second day of the holiday Sephira Theissen and I went for coffee on Jefferson Street. There entered a well-dressed man and sat next to my table. He told me he came from the Philippines. He speaks German, Polish, Russian, French, English, and Dutch. He told me he was wounded in the Spanish-American war in the Philippines. I went with him to his room in the lodging house. He told me he has been in Chicago just two days and came to claim money from the U.S. because he was wounded in the Philippine Isles. He showed me different letters and papers from firms in Singapore, Yokohama, Sydney, and Manila, of which he was an agent. I think he was born in Roumania or Poland. He asked me what I was doing and I told him of my situation. All of a sudden he told me he has just $2 but he expects $35 from a friend. I gave him $2 but then he wanted $5 more. I did not have this so he will come tomorrow to get it.

I do not know who he is but his papers look very good. His name is Daniel Peurotkovsky. We went to a Yiddish theater together and saw Samson and Delilah. I wonder if Mr. Daniel will come to fetch the $5. I wonder what kind of man he is. He wants to help me -- but what is help from a man? I think the Lord will help me. Daniel showed me some English papers in which was written about the bombardment in which he was wounded. He hopes to get $85 from the government for compensation. Mr. Daniel told me I should work some more and then he and I could go and peddle together. I am afraid he will be another Mr. Hauser who worked with Alexander.

May 29: I am still doing the heavy work for Mr. Sondheimer even though I have written to him that I would like to measure the lumber. I don't know how long a human being can go on this way, but maybe you learn patience and gain strength. Today Mr. Daniel came to get the $5 which I gave him. I am foolish because I do not know
if I will see the money again.

I had a very bad week. I strained my back lifting some heavy lumber from a wagon. I did not go to work today and will stay home Saturday and Sunday. I hope I will feel better on Monday. I have decided to look for other work and go to a Christian firm. Mr. Daniel came again for money and I gave him some, so now he owes me $15.80. I think he is a member from a mob club and now he has gone. I am very easy going. I do not know what I will do so I am going to go to work tomorrow. I am ashamed.

I had a letter from Mr. Bender that he will come back to America July 15th. He is sorry that he went home last year. He will go to St. Paul, Minn. July 1st. I am still working for Mr. Sondheimer. I guess I have no feeling or energy to look for other work. This week I earned $20 and I wonder if I should not go elsewhere and look for better work. Almost everywhere they like American workers better than Europeans. I ask myself what will be with Rachel and the children. Sophie finished the sixth class and is now with her mother in the forest and Cecile and Mania will have to go to school at Zbaraz. It is hard to decide what to do, but I must decide soon. I am getting older and the children too. I am waiting for a letter from Alexander. Maybe he will come here again to me. It would be nice to go with him to another city. We could talk things over and decide what to do. I would like to see him before I leave here.

July 23: I had an accident and was hit with a piece of lumber on the shoulder. I went to see a doctor and got some medicine. The wound is healed. I didn't work for 10 days but I still have pain.

Chicago. While I didn't work I went around to see the city. You see here the bad side of a great city -- poverty, dirty flats, and too many people living in them. What a difference to come to the center of the city - big stores, office buildings, and busy people pressing through the crowd. I see here the typical life of an American city, a cosmopolitan American city. There are people from all the nations in the world building a new home for themselves.

This ward is the home of the Jewish ghetto. When I went through the ghetto I thought I was in Warsaw, Krakow or Lemberg. The names of the streets are
written in Hebrew and the names of the stores are written in Hebrew. Saturday all stores are closed and people are dressed very elegant and walk quiet in the streets. If you go around the streets where the Czechs or Poles live, it looks like that country. You hear the well-known jargon which the German speaks. The foreigners here live together and keep the customs of the old country. Few have the good luck to have their dreams of a good life realized in America. They work hard to just make a poor living, like slaves from morning till evening. They live in dirty apartments and seem to be satisfied with what they have. It is easier for them than for a man once accustomed to comfort and ideas, unable to work with his hands.

Thursday was the second day of OB. I went to the post office Friday and there was a letter from Rachel. Sophie is through with her school in Zbaraz as there is no more than the sixth year there. I hope it is possible for Sophie to stay with Rachel and the three little children and that they might go to Tarnopol where she can again go to school. I would like to send them 50 or 60 gulden a month. Cecile and Mania can stay with my parents in Zbaraz yet and go to school. I would not mind to work as I do now if I could take care of my family. They would need to be in Tarnopol for the beginning of school on September 1st.

July 29: I work at the Sondheimer lumber yard for five months now but I am always looking for better work. After our New Years I will send announcement that I open an agency for commissions to ship lumber to Germany from the United States. I guess I must learn typewriting and get more addresses of lumber firms in Germany.

Sep. 17: After Rosh Hashanah I sent out 2,000 circulars. I got many inquiries from Germany. I am in connection with some lumber mills in America too. They ask many questions - the first if I have money. I answer the truth, that I am poor and have nothing. They write back that they do not do business with anybody that is without capital. So my money and work was for the devil. What do I do now: Shall I go to Mandrosia or Siberia!

Dec. 2: I did not write for a long time. I sent Rachel $10 although she asked that I send her at least $20 every month. She would like to move to Zbaraz. Her
father will give her 30 gulden a month and she
thinks my father will give her 15 or 20 gulden a
month. She wrote too that my parents would wish
that they do not have to keep the older children
any longer but she plans to take Cecile and Mania
and leave them there so that they can go to school.
I have not heard from my parents, Solomon, and
Alexander. Is there a plot against me? I do not
think of going home now. I am ashamed to go home
with nothing in my pockets. I think again of going
to Siberia but for this I need $150. I hope the
Lord will help me to find a job to earn enough
money to raise my children to be good human beings
and that they will have it better than I. I work
like a peasant now and poor Rachel waits.

Jan. 1, 1902: I am working at another job for Mr. Sondheimer
and get $10 every week. We unload a ship on the dock.
I loaded a wagon with building lumber and they let
me drive the wagon. I also tally lumber. It is
much easier work and I am thankful. It is as our
King Solomon said: (in Hebrew)

Last week I wrote to Rachel that I can send her
$20 every month. Her father shall give her 30 gulden
and I hope she will be able to live in Tarnopol with
this. I hope I would not need the help of Father
Kleiner any more. Sophie must not be indolent and
must start in to school again.

May 31: I had a letter from a firm in Rotterdam asking
for a shipment of Round Lumber. I have a feeling
God did not forget me and my family. (some Hebrew
writing). I need money to make the shipment and wrote
to my father-in-law for a loan of 250 gulden. He
sent me 200 and I borrowed $20 from my landlord. On
October 4th with the ship which will leave from Norfolk
I will send 4,000 feet of hickory logs. I sent letters
and invoices.

Oct. 21: Until today I did not hear if the shipment
arrived. I gave the business to a credit association
to collect as I did not get my money back. I had
what looked like very good work when I was asked to
deriver some Red Oak on a commission sale. It was a
better order than usual so I asked if I should not
load better boards. I worked for 1 1/2 hours, got money
for 2 hours and was told I should not come back again.
Feb. 23, 1903:

Comes a long period when I cannot find work or just work a short time in one place or another. I worked longest for a piano manufacturing company for $12 a week. There was a strike of lumber workers which lasted for four weeks and I had no job and did not get back to the piano company.

May 10:

I am working again for $12 a week. In the meantime I met four peasants from Czortchower who came from Canada. They have an apartment and want to rent me a room. I moved in with them on June 20 at $2 a month. I bought some furniture and the peasants are nice and do as much for me as possible.

I read an ad in a lumber paper of a firm in San Francisco who have property in Green City, Cal. and they are looking for workers and will pay well. I answered and said I would like to come there with 10 or 12 men and would they have work and for the year round. They wrote therewould be good pay and I told them I would try to get there in August. It is possible that I will begin a business now and make enough to bring my family here. I would like to settle down and not wander from place to place.

July 14 to Nov. 29:

I worked for the firm Fathauer at $13.50 a week and it was not hard work. It was senseless not knowing what the future would bring and if I would make more to bring my family.

Dec. 4:

Left for Seattle, Washington with the Ruthenians and arrived today. We do not know what we will do here, maybe dig trees or work on the railroad. The forest camps are closed for two months. I read in the paper that in the Garden Station Suburb, R.R. company, many houses are to be built and there is work there. I went there but I learned that every worker has to buy his own lot for one house because it will be a city in the future. You have to pay $10 a month and later $5. I bought a house to build and worked for others. I guess the company is a cheater and no one earns anything. It does not look good. I have just unpleasantness with workers and the company. I could not send money.
Jan. 22, 1904: Seattle. People found work in Aberdeen through the employment office. I went to Tacoma where I found a job with the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Co. I worked there for 12 days but I cannot get a job there as tallyman until I am there for a year. I tried to work at nights at a saw mill for 17 days but I could not stand this hard work at night. I am very tired from all this misery, not knowing what the future will bring. Shall I go the the Far East? But there is the Russo Japanese war! I guess it will be hard to go there. I could just go to Tiensin. Shall I go to Winnipeg, Canada? Maybe I could get a job there as a foreman. The time passes and I will be a stranger to my family and they to me. I cannot help it.

Mar. 25: I live now in Tacoma again and have worked as a tallyman for the Western Mill Co., and then in Aberdeen and in Maltby. April Rachel wrote that my father-in-law Jacob Kleiner passed away on April 4, 1904 in Czymalow. It is very hard now for my family. Rachel sent me a letter from her brother Ignatz in Vienna offering to take Sophie to his home and to send her to school there, to a business school, or to a teacher training for kindergarten. Rachel asks me what I think. I can't send her any money so how can I tell her what to do? It is a good idea for Sophie, so she can learn German and know something that she could use in the future. If God will help she will not have to ever work. It is good of Ignatz to do this and I will write.

I am not working. The lumber business is very bad. Most of the mills are closed and I have decided to go to Canada.

(Here H.N. writes in English -- as an exercise and a credo to live by.)

I wonder how man looks at such actions as I have to decide on at present. Should a man out of work accept anything he can get to do temporarily or should he resolve to accept nothing less than the highest position he can if I think everything depends on the man and his resources. Some people would say it depends on the man but I am inclined to say it depends most on his resources. If a man has filled a high class position for years and can command a certain salary;
if he is a man who has tested his own ability thoroughly - I think he will do better looking for the position he wants even if he is obliged to run into debt to do it. But not always one can make it for a rule. We must consider how matters will stand for us if we are unsuccessful. On that I could give testimony.

The chief danger in accepting an inferior position is that one is almost sure to let down; to lose ambition because he feels partially satisfied. "I am not starving" one thinks. "Perhaps I ought to be satisfied." So he economises, curtails the gratifications of his tastes, cuts down expenses and perhaps manages to save a little of his small earnings.

No one would blame him in bowing to necessity in the matter of lessening his expenses, but as soon as he, the man, becomes reconciled to a meaner way of living he is almost sure to lose some of his ambition to get on in the world. I know a man who, after holding a big position as first salesman -- or was it manager, for some years as told -- after I sought him already as a "has been" -- went into business for himself, failed, losing all his savings. He was so demoralized by his failure that he immediately accepted a very small position in a men's furnishing store. After his experience in business he felt fairly well satisfied to drudge along without any responsibility. Since that time he has held two other positions similar to the last one, and has thoroughly given up the idea of ever getting his first salary and position or to start in some kind of business for himself again. That man lost his ambition by accepting a makeshift position and will probably remain a "has been" all his life.

Yes, it is very dangerous to accept the so called makeshift position. I know it myself. While it is easy enough to count up the disadvantages of accepting
such positions -- on the other hand one may easily fail to consider carefully enough the difficulties involved in holding out for as good a position as you believe you can fill. If you have enough strength of character to do this, and of course if you have estimated your ability correctly, it will be I think far better for everyone to use up the last cent and savings -- even temporarily to deprive your family of comforts for the sake of obtaining the highest position you are able to hold.

After all I can't say I am sure that I am right in my views on that subject -- maybe people have other and better views -- time will show it.

Success does not consist in never making mistakes but never making the same mistakes twice.

Written in Seattle, New Haven Hotel, July 14, 1904.

(End of section written in English and copied verbatim.)

Aug. 3: Seattle. I quit my job and got $40 and I will leave for Arrowhead B.C. where I will be a tallyman for $3 per day. I started to work there August 5 and on August 25th was told pay would be only $2.50 with room and board. I cannot see that I will come to money in this way and it is very hard to decide what to do. I have a letter from my friend Mr. Hermann in Seattle. He will go to Mandruza (?) and wants me to go with him but there is still the war with Russia and Japan and there is no sense to go there. He sent a letter from Rachel to me and from Ignatz in Vienna. I will send Rachel 100 gulden ($40) and $10 to Ignatz for Sophie.

Nov. 5: They want to cut my wages again and I will get only $1.50 a day. For this money I do not like to work. I went to the president of the firm and he told me that I should go to Calgary and I can be a salesman for the company. I can sell lumber and different things which are made in the mill on commission. But now I have to have suits. I cannot go to sell lumber in my work clothes. I left my suitcase with my clothes at Mr. Hermann's in Seattle. On October 22nd I got a letter from Hermann asking what he should do
with my things as he was leaving for San Francisco. I sent him $2 and told him to send the suitcase to me with the Seattle transfer company and take a check to send to me. I didn't hear from him but I decided to go to Calgary and send a wire to the transfer company. I have written to the place where Hermann worked and to the place where he lived but no answer. Since I sent my money to Europe I have only $55 left. What shall I do since I have lost my trunk and my clothes? If the things do not come by Wednesday I will buy a coat for $12 and a hat for $2 and I will go to Calgary. Rachel sent me a picture of the children. I do not know them and we will be strangers. I hope God will help me that I will make good business and be able to send for my family.

Arrowhead B.C. November 7, 1904 END OF DIARY

Postscript added by Stella Sereth Sameth, March 9, 1974

And he "made a good business." Within a year he established himself in a business. His family arrived to a comfortable home furnished with the necessities. His brother, Alexander, ten years his junior came to join him in a business already established. His wife's nephews came: in 1907, Morris Kleiner, and in 1912, Leon Kleiner. The son of his sister, Herman Nagler, came in 1911, later to be joined by his parents, and sisters, and brothers. And others came, all to get their original experience at the Riverside Lumber Co., the nucleus of what was to become a business which was to include lumber mills, timber holdings, factories, and an export business.
Oblituaries

M. Kleiner, wood firm founder, dies

Morris Kleiner, 95, who founded Model Lumber Co. in Fife, died last night.

He was born in the part of Poland that was ruled by Austria before World War I and made his way to Canada in 1907. In Calgary, he went to school to learn English and worked for an uncle in the lumber business for a dollar a day.

Later he became a Canadian citizen, but moved to the United States in 1915. He lived in Bellingham briefly before moving to Tacoma, where he bought Liberty Lumber Co at South 41st and M streets.

He and his Montreal-born wife, Pauline, became United States citizens in the 1920s and had a son and two daughters.

He was noted for giving away jars of honey tagged "A Honey of a Lumber Yard."

In 1953, he made an unsuccessful bid for the Tacoma City Council. He remained active in city politics and community projects after that.

He was active in B'nai B'rith and Temple Beth El. His memberships included the Boys Clubs, Kiwanis, Masons, Goodwill Industries, NAACP, Urban League and the Salvation Army.

Mr. Kleiner received a 1975 Brotherhood award from the local chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

His son, Herman, said Mr. Kleiner's greatest pleasure was in sending as much as he could afford to various charities and needy individuals.

Besides his son and his wife, Mr. Kleiner is survived by two daughters, Malca Chall of Hayward, Calif., and Mrs. Kenneth (Josephine) Heiman of Tacoma, eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Buckley-King is in charge.
FAMILY TREE: KLEINER, Moritz and Pauline (Weinfield) (Prepared September 1974; Updated May 1986)

MYSELF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Moritz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Kozowka, Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/21/1889--1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Calgary, Alberta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>October 7, 1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
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MY HUSBAND/WIFE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pauline Weinfield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/3/1894</td>
</tr>
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MY CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Malca Kleiner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>7/16/1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Harold J. Chall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6/20/1939--9/29/83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Harold, born in Brooklyn is an inventive engineer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Herman Kleiner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>8/24/1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Barbara Burnett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5/21/1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Barbara is the daughter of Celia (b. 6/11/1900) and Myer (1893-1964)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Josephine Isabel Kleiner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>10/27/1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Kenneth Heiman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11/4/1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Kenneth is a realtor, and talented musician</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THEIR CHILDREN -- MY GRANDCHILDREN

(Continued on page 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gregory Franklin Kleiner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child of</td>
<td>Herman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1951</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Richard Morris Kleiner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child of</td>
<td>Herman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Josephine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1949</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Jeffrey Morris Heiman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child of</td>
<td>Josephine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Josephine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1957</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>David Henry Chall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child of</td>
<td>Malca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1952</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Barry Franklin Chall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child of</td>
<td>Malca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 1951</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on page 2)
### FAMILY TREE: KLEINER, Moritz

#### MY BROTHERS & SISTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simon 1880</td>
<td>Gusta Burg</td>
<td>Came from Europe after WWI Died in Tacoma, 1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph c. 1883</td>
<td>Henry Weinfeld 1880-1945</td>
<td>Pauline Levine Attorney in Montreal Daughters: Buddy, Vera Son, Mortimer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard c. 1892-1939</td>
<td>Louis Weinfeld 1883-1933</td>
<td>Lived in Montreal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonia (Toncea) Garbarski* 1904</td>
<td>Emilia Weinfeld Lappin 1885-1982</td>
<td>Louis Lapin in Montreal (dec.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Weinfeld Weinfeld b. 1896</td>
<td></td>
<td>Married cousin - divorced Lives in Boston Son, David</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### MY SPOUSES BROTHERS & SISTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ida c. 1892-1939</td>
<td>Louis Weinfeld 1883-1933</td>
<td>Both were pharmacists in Warsaw Drowned while saving daughter. Daughter, Marysia, and wife died in Warsaw concentration camp, WWII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonia (Toncea) Garbarski* 1904</td>
<td>Emilia Weinfeld Lappin 1885-1982</td>
<td>Louis Lapin in Montreal (dec.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Weinfeld Weinfeld b. 1896</td>
<td></td>
<td>Married cousin - divorced Lives in Boston Son, David</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**MY FATHER'S SIDE**

**MY FATHER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Abraham Kleiner (Adolf)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Poland 1860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage (to my mother)</td>
<td>Malca Greenfield (d. 1899)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>September 10, 1933 in Tarnopol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Father married three times after death of Malca</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MY FATHER'S BROTHERS & SISTERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>1864-1933</th>
<th>1869-1927</th>
<th>1868-1936</th>
<th>1900-1959</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ignatz</td>
<td>Gusti d. 1940 in Poland concentration camp</td>
<td>Isadore Gottesman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Helen Schotz</td>
<td></td>
<td>F. Seiden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanny</td>
<td>Rosa (Rachel) 1868-1936</td>
<td>Henry Noah Sereth 1864-1944</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>F. Seiden</td>
<td></td>
<td>F. Seiden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children (dec.) Ida, Morris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecil (Girl)</td>
<td>Cecil Allen 1892-1974</td>
<td>Emily Lieberman 1894-1964</td>
<td>Stella Sameth 1899-</td>
<td>Clara Neider 1900-1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Favius Teitelbaum d. Tarnopol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Sons - Morris, Bernard</td>
<td>Daughter - Sophie Weinfield 1889-1972</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris: Son Jack (d. 1972)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married Lola. Another son (name unknown)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard: Son Oswald changed name to Tomassio during WWII in Roumania. Went to Israel after war, worked in bank in TelAviv. dec. 1968</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Daughter Rachel, married Bernard Hromek (dec. c. 1960), Lives in Jerusalem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MY GRANDFATHER**

(His Father)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Jacob Kleiner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>1904 in Grzymalow, Poland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# FAMILY TREE: KLEINER, Moritz

## MY MOTHER'S SIDE

### MY MOTHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Malca Greenfield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>Galicia c. 1863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage (to my father)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Was about 36 years old</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MY MOTHER'S BROTHERS & SISTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Simon Greenfield</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Malcia</th>
<th>Died in New York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name/date</td>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Brana</td>
<td>Children - Louis, Celia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name/date</td>
<td>Leah</td>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Falkenflick</td>
<td>Moved to U.S. Changed name to Falk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name/date</td>
<td>Kelman Gruenfeld</td>
<td>Married to</td>
<td>Sophie</td>
<td>Feldman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Czarna</td>
<td>Rosenzweig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MY GRANDFATHER** (Her Father)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Kelman Gruenfeld</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MY GRANDMOTHER** (Her Mother)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sophie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MY GREAT-GRANDPARENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>His father</th>
<th>Her father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His mother</td>
<td>Her mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please list great-great-grandparents if you know of them)

(If more space is needed, add additional page)
### MY SPOUSE'S FAMILY TREE
(on father's side)

#### SPOUSE'S FATHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Israel Weinfield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>1859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage (to spouse's mother)</td>
<td>Esther</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>September 13, 1913 in Montreal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### SPOUSE'S FATHER'S BROTHERS & SISTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/d ate</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/d ate</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/d ate</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### SPOUSE'S GRANDFATHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/d ate</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### SPOUSE'S GRANDMOTHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/d ate</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### SPOUSE'S GREAT-GRANDPARENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>His father</th>
<th>His mother</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Her father</td>
<td>Her mother</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Please list great-great-grandparents if you know of them)

(If more space is needed, add additional page)
MY SPOUSE'S FAMILY TREE
(on mother's side)

SPOUSE'S MOTHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Esther Chaia Zwibel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td>12/26/1860 in Galicia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>October 10, 1946 in Montreal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPOUSE'S MOTHER'S BROTHERS & SISTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Married to</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SPOUSE'S GRANDFATHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SPOUSE'S GRANDMOTHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/date</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SPOUSE'S GREAT-GRANDPARENTS

His father | Her father |
His mother | Her mother |
Comments   |            |
(Please list great-great-grandparents if you know of them)

(If more space is needed, add additional page)
Malca Chall

Graduated from Reed College in 1942 with a B.A. degree, and from the State University of Iowa in 1943 with an M.A. degree in Political Science.


Active in community affairs as a director and past president of the League of Women Voters of the Hayward Area specializing in state and local government; on county-wide committees in the field of mental health; on election campaign committees for school tax and bond measures, and candidates for school board and state legislature.

Employed in 1967 by the Regional Oral History Office interviewing in fields of agriculture and water resources, Jewish Community history, and women leaders in civic affairs and politics.