



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Dr. Joseph Stephen Hall

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

MARTIN: Dr. Hall, as you know, the Capitol Hill Association of Merchants and Professionals' Community Foundation has established the Ruth Ann Overbeck History Project for the purpose of collecting oral histories from longtime Capitol Hill citizens like yourself. It is the intention of those people who established the project that the collection of oral histories would provide a permanent ongoing record of people and events that have shaped Capitol Hill over the years. It is possible these oral histories will be published. The most important mission is to preserve for all time these oral histories now. The Overbeck history project people are most interested in securing everything Dr. Hall would like to offer and that is why I am here. Although I have prepared questions to ask of you, I know you have so much to tell I will only prompt you asking you to expand on any subject related to your experiences on Capitol Hill that you choose. And so first, why don't you tell us your full name.

HALL: Well, my full name is Joseph Stephen Hall.

MARTIN: And you came to Capitol Hill when?

HALL: Well, I first saw the city of Washington—I'm a North Carolinian—I first saw the city of Washington to my great wonderment, as a kid. It was in 1944, I remember it quite well, when I was through Union Station, they pointed out the Presidents Suite and I thought, oh my how wonderful, you know, that's where B. Smith's is now, the restaurant.

MARTIN: Yes. Yes.

HALL: And we were not allowed to go in there but we were shown the area where it was, and I thought, oh what a grand, grand, grand building, and as you know, that building has had a very interesting history, ups and downs, since then. Anyway, that was my first experience with Washington, DC, and then I came here permanently in 1958. I came here to the University of Maryland on a graduate grant. I finally finished up there. I then moved into town in 1960 and I've lived in town ever since then. However, when I was there, I was in town quite frequently, doing research at the Library of Congress and other places here and there.

This house was built in 1910. It is recorded that this was a vacant lot at that time, and a George P. and Elizabeth Tucker, they were both from Massachusetts, bought this property and had this house built and the house next [trouble with microphone]

MARTIN: Go ahead, you were talking about the Adams Building.

HALL: Right, the Adams Building. The people next door lived here for many many years after I got the house. Here is a picture of the Tucker family.

MARTIN: This is fabulous!

HALL: And that's the house.

MARTIN: Now, how did you get this photo?

HALL: It's an interesting story. I was lucky enough to meet, through the years, two granddaughters of George P. and Elizabeth Tucker: Betsy Fry and Lillian Tucker. And Betsy Fry and Lillian Tucker both gave me some pictures. Here's the house from Eighth Street; this is the parlor of this house; this is the room right behind you, showing what they called, at that time, that room, the library. This is the room behind you, so-called library. That mantle is right there behind you.

MARTIN: This looks like it was taken at Christmastime.

HALL: It must have been, yes. She made notes on the back.

MARTIN: Uh-huh. This says 1920.

HALL: Uh-huh. This is one of the sons, then obviously grown, Max, in the front parlor, right in that room where you went to see Caruso [Dr. Hall's canary] and as the bay window that's in that room.

MARTIN: And the greenery around the painting on the wall.

HALL: And my own mother did that. They would put greenery on the pictures in the old days. And here are the two teenage boys, Prescott and Max. Then here is the front of this house where you walked up the steps. The interesting wrought iron railing is still there. This shows the side of the house from this little parking area out here and notice that there were awnings on the house at that time.

MARTIN: The park that Mrs. Jones managed to preserve.

HALL: Oh! She fought like cats and dogs, and I fought like cats and dogs, for years we fought. I've been here now, 27 years. They were here many years before that and we have always fought with the city over this little plot out here and I finally won and got a little portion of it for myself. I now have possession of the part that is fenced in. Anyway, here's a street scene on Massachusetts Avenue. Here are other bits and pieces of... this is out on this front stoop, this is out in the front yard. Well, anyway, enough of that.

MARTIN: Look at the maturity of the trees there.

HALL: Exactly. And I have another one that shows the front of this house, looking toward Constitution Avenue back here, which at that time was old B Street. It was not changed until in the forties. They changed—Independence Avenue and Constitution Avenue stopped at the foot of the Hill and they became their numbered streets and lettered streets, B Street, NE and B Street, SE, but then they decided to extend the name on up through the Hill and beyond to the river, the Anacostia. But anyway, that kind of gives you a little bit of a feel, and I have other pictures here, many other pictures, of this house at that period.

MARTIN: That the Project may copy?

HALL: Yes, you certainly may.

MARTIN: And return to you.

HALL: Yes. I interrupted my own self. This one picture that I have that shows Constitution Avenue from the front of this house shows a horse and buggy and I think there's also a car, so it shows you the period of time, the transition between horse and buggy...

MARTIN: So that would be about 1910?

HALL: Um, it would have been more like '20.

MARTIN: 1920? But still horses though?

HALL: Yes, some people still had horses. Well, let's get back to my little notes ere I stray. This area, Washington and particularly Capitol Hill. Capitol Hill was a very, little hometown—really it was redneck. Capitol Hill was really quite a small, redneck part of this town. The bars, for instance, on Pennsylvania Avenue, I myself saw, out of some of those bars, you know the building now across from Mr. Henry's, across from the Post Office is and others? [ed: Sixth and Pennsylvania Avenue, SE]

MARTIN: Yes.

HALL: Those were row houses, large large, three story and English basement row houses. The basements of those houses had all been turned into bars. I have seen several times bums being thrown out of there by the bouncers. Literally being tossed up the steps and onto the sidewalk because they were too drunk or begging or whatever have you. As a matter of fact, Mr. Henry's was called, when I came here, it was called the 601, because that's the address on Pennsylvania Avenue. They had high-back wooden booths right down the middle of the space that is now the restaurant. It was an old old splintery wooden floor, so bad that they put sawdust on it, and they could just sweep up the sawdust with all the spills and the spilled beer and whatever, you know. So this was quite a redneck, scruffy area.

Speaking of the Avenue, let's go down that avenue while we're there. Where is now the Madison Building [ed: Library of Congress] there was bunch of large large rowhouses. I went into those buildings just before the demolition. I rescued and, you will see out in my outer foyer, a set of fireplace columns, that I made into large candlesticks through the years and I rescued those and stuck one under one arm and one under the other and lugged them home. And they soon tore those buildings down.

In that block, there was the Trover Shop, there was Mike Palm's, there were several other businesses, they all moved down into the next block because their block was being torn down. I remember the Trover moving, they finally got two buildings there. Mike Palm moved down there and several others. Now, the old Sherrill's was right where it was and Sherrill's never changed, it just never never never changed. But proceeding on down that avenue, I went into and saw movies in both the Penn and the Grand. The Penn is where the Penn Building is now. The Grand was across the street where that something "Market Place" is now? You know, that strange building where you walk down?

MARTIN: Yes.

HALL: Well, that was where the Grand Theater was. They were both small, neighborhood theaters which was the thing in those days to do. It was the television of that day, you went to movies. And every neighborhood had its own small movie house. They were there. So the street was really quite an interesting, almost brawly street.

MARTIN: Almost what? Brawly?

HALL: Brawly, yes. *Brawls*, yes. [Laughs] You will forgive my British...

MARTIN: I like it.

HALL: Sometimes I use. My father was British, my mother was North Carolinian and they met and married there. Anyway, street scenes. Back to this street. When I came here, to Washington, moved into town, I was not in this house, I was in 708 A Street, NE, right around the corner, the house that the Reeses now have.

MARTIN: Oh yes.

HALL: Joe Reese and Sherry Saunders.

MARTIN: Oh you mean, A Street, not...

HALL: "A" as in apple.

MARTIN: Oh, they'll be delighted to hear that.

HALL: Yes. That was the first house I ever bought here, and I broke my back re-doing that house. That house had 24 people living in it when I bought it.

MARTIN: [gasp]

HALL: Yes, that's the way you lived on Capitol Hill then.

MARTIN: Tell me more about that.

HALL: Well, it was divided into three apartments. There was an English basement, a main floor and an upstairs. There were no restrictions on the number of people you could have in a place so Aunt Suzy would sleep during the daytime, Uncle Ben would come in and sleep at night, and then he would go to work, you know it was one of those deals. This house, even, in its time, was used as—not as a boarding house, but it was used as a rooming house. During the war, the Second World War, it was considered very patriotic to open your home to the war workers, the typists and the file clerks, women and men, particularly women, who came here by the thousands to work for the feds and push the war effort. And in the case of this house, the history shows that it was used that way and Suzy and Mary and Jane had the back room which, at one time, was the dining room. This was not the original dining room of this house. This was the reception hall, built into this house. And then they would close the door and then right in this room would be Jim and Bob and Jack, or whoever and in that room would be someone else, and they thought nothing of it. They would just all hop into...

MARTIN: Sounds like fun.

HALL: Yeah. Yeah.

MARTIN: Like a big fraternity party.

HALL: Yeah, must have been. Anyway, when I moved to Washington, Massachusetts Avenue was very different from what it is now. Inez Jones had this house painted. I regret that it was ever painted because it's hard to keep paint on brick, you have to keep it up forever. But she said, "Oh, Joseph it's such an ugly house," she calls me Joseph, she said. "Now, Joseph, it's such an ugly house. I'm going to have this house painted." Well, she did and fortunately, she left the paneling and the woodwork in this room and interiorly, she did not do any painting, fortunately. She did paint the three fireplaces on this floor, but she left the rest of it fortunately, because it's lovely chestnut paneling and oak surrounds the doors and windows.

But anyway, the street scene from here on up, going west. The Capitol Hill Hospital as we now know it, the buildings there. It was called Casualty Hospital. And then it was called Rogers Memorial because a

Dr. Rogers bought it and took it over. Then it became Capitol Hill Hospital and it was quite a going concern. Neighborhoods had their own hospitals and, by the way, Providence [ed: Hospital] was over here off of Third [SE], which is now a park. And Providence was a huge, great big stone building, a rather Romanesque big ominous-looking building. There was a hospital over there.

And this hospital, they were very well patronized, they had a lot of business. Across the street at what is now the new townhouses, on Seventh, Seventh and Mass., going down to C, there were townhouses there when I came here. I had friends there, and I visited in that block in those houses. Then the hospital bought that lot, tore the houses down, put a parking lot. And you can remember the parking lot which has now been sold and they're re-building houses there. OK, proceeding on down the way, past the corner of Sixth. At the corner of Sixth and Mass., where there are some relatively new townhouses, there was a large ugly looking building, big brick building, which became, I suppose it had been an apartment building or something. But it became a nurses' home after the hospital took over the small building back here. Originally, this building right here at the corner of Constitution and Eighth had been a nurses' home, and I have been in that building a number of times. The apartments were lovely. They were two-bedroom apartments. The nurses were supposed to live there, I'm sure. Beautiful woodwork, I remember the doors, and the upstairs floors were very very attractive.

But then the hospital expanded. They put the doctors' offices over there, they made a little clinic, out-patient clinic, and they moved the nurses up to, as I was saying, the corner of Sixth and Mass., in an old building that's now gone, and they put houses, new townhouses in there, between Mass. and C. Stanton Park was just as it is now except, both it and Lincoln were very run-down. I would have to say that they're in much better shape now. As a matter of fact, there's been tremendous improvement overall in the appearance and upkeep and the quality of Capitol Hill. I would just have to say that very emphatically because both those parks were quite run-down at that time.

MARTIN: How did they look exactly?

HALL: The playground was never thought of until the days of Margo Higgins and the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association people put that park in there. The sidewalks were there, pretty much, and the statue was there, the equestrian statue. But now at Lincoln Park the statue of Lincoln freeing the slaves was in the center, up there now where there's now shrubbery. During the, let's see, the 70s, it would be '73 or 4, they moved that statue to where it is now because the sculptor who did the big Kennedy head in the..

MARTIN: Berk. Yeah.

HALL: Right, at the Performing Arts Center, Kennedy Center, did the Bethune statue. And so they put it at one end, and they moved Lincoln to this end, to the west end, and put her at the east end, down there at, what would that be, Thirteenth.

MARTIN: Yes.

HALL: Yeah. The shrubbery, the trees, all that has been considerably improved in both the parks. I take a little, tiny bit of credit, for working on my own little park out here. Because do you know that in Washington, there are 500 and some of these “pocket parks” and this one out here was grossly neglected for many many years. And finally, after battling with the city, I got hold of some of it and started working.

Anyway, we’re past the first house over here. At that time, when I first came into town in 1960, the Restoration Society was kind of up and coming. I’ve always considered that a poor name for the restoration people because we no more restore these houses to their original condition than anything. We put in modern stuff and that. Real restoration would be as it was exactly at that time. We renovate and improve and upgrade but... A Curley Boswell, a wonderful leading light at that time here in this area, was the head of the restoration group at that time, and he did an awful lot to bring about the, shall we say, popularity of Capitol Hill. Capitol Hill, when I came here, was not a place to live. Now, it’s a pretty nice address. “Oh, you live on the Hill. Well fine.” But at the beginning of this area, Capitol Hill residential area did not extend beyond Second Street ever, ever. You lived beyond that either in Northeast or you lived in Southeast and that was just the way it was.

I guess the first residences really were there on First Street across from the Capitol because they built a number of houses there, now torn down, where the Library of Congress is. The Jefferson Building. And congressmen and senators would come and they would board there for the few days that Congress was in session, and then they would go back to Pocatello [laughs] Well, I know it was not a state at that time, but anyway, gradually, the residential area, houses, began to creep this way and it was thought in the original founding of Washington that the eastern part of the city would grow and prosper before the western part did because there was this swamp down there, the Tiber River went on rampages at times. This area was much more placid and they thought that the residential area would expand here but Northwest, of course, became the big big residential area eventually.

In the block where the Folger Library is now, I have here in *Lost Washington*, this is my Washingtoniana collection. But I have a picture of the houses that were where the Folger is now. And they were supposed to be the most handsome and expensive houses in Washington at that time, but that quality of building did not continue. It then went, as I said, on to Northwest. I guess they wanted to be closer to...

MARTIN: OK, early 19th century?

HALL: Yes, yes it would have been early 19th century. But getting back to the matter at hand. When I first came here, you would see very few families. I can't recall a child, I can't recall one child...

MARTIN: Now that's interesting.

HALL: ...living on Capitol Hill when I came here in 1960. Not one. And of course it was a racial, it was an area in transition. This first house that I bought was inhabited by African-Americans, was owned by a woman who lived in Silver Spring, and that was kind of the thing. They had moved out of the city and rented, and that's how so many of these houses went down. Interiorly, these houses went down. Now this house never did because it was not used that way, but a lot of the houses, the house I bought on Eighth Street, was just beat up to pieces. And I had to go in and do an awful lot of stripping of woodwork, restoring back to as near as you could find original. There had been marble hearths in there, that was gone, beat up, goodness knows where it went. Had to get out and get as near as one could figure it had been. So, it was a run-down area. Over here on Seventh Street, you know where Contex Realty was?

MARTIN: Yes.

HALL: All right, right next to that there was a Safeway. There are two big houses built in there now, but there was a Safeway there that I used for my grocery shopping when I was on A, it was just around the corner. And in the riots of '68, that was broken into, they stepped right in the broken windows, looted the place, and it never did, it was never restored as a grocery. They put a brick front on that thing and it became kind of a flea market in there I think or something. Price of houses, you can't believe, you just can't believe the price of houses. I paid fourteen-five for that big house where the Reeses are now, put a lot of money into it, but my goodness, look at what you have now.

MARTIN: Fourteen-five in what year?

HALL: That was in 1960. 14.5. And then, let's see Nancy, you live on East Capitol, 1100 block?

MARTIN: Right, 1124.

HALL: OK. Well then, let me tell you this part of the story. Everybody who knew me, and I was working at Maryland at that time, commuting in and out. Well, everybody in Maryland thought I was a fool to live in the city. But then when I sold that house on A Street, dear Inez Jones, who is so much part of my life, said, "Now, Joseph." I had her looking for houses for me. She said, "Now, I want to show you a house and I don't want you to say anything about the location. Now, just let me take you there in the daytime." Well, she took me to 1367 Massachusetts Avenue, Southeast. Can you picture that house?

MARTIN: 13... let me think, 1367 Mass.

HALL: Do you know Brian and Charlotte Furness?

MARTIN: I do not. I only know that famous name.

HALL: Well, I sold them my house eventually. They live in what at one time was my home. And people said, "You are an idiot! Have you lost your mind to move east of Lincoln Park? Don't you know that you will be killed or something?" Well, it was a very very fortunate thing. And then later, I bought another house in your block, 1102 East Capitol. Aren't you between Eleventh and Tennessee?

MARTIN: No, we're right off of Twelfth.

HALL: You're just beyond Twelfth.

MARTIN: Right.

HALL: 24, OK. 1102 is the second house from Eleventh. And Inez said, "Now Joseph." And she said, I don't know whether she told you, but she was a realtor.

MARTIN: Oh yes.

HALL: She was a broker. And to this day she brags about Congressional Realty Company. And she ran it right out of this house.

MARTIN: Oh yeah, I know. You'll enjoy reading her interview.

HALL: Well, she is a doll. She's an absolute doll. So I bought that house.

MARTIN: Did you live in it?

HALL: No, I never lived in it. I used...

MARTIN: Who bought it, or who rented it?

HALL: Who rented it? I have no idea about names. I know I had two...

MARTIN: Not names but...

HALL: I had two young lawyers, well there was a couple upstairs, and the main floor was occupied by two young lawyers. And they gave me fits. "Well, but as a landlord you're supposed to do so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so." And I would do so-and-so, "but you didn't do so-and-so and so-and-so" and I finally decided that I would never ever rent to lawyers. I would never, if you were a lawyer, my dear, I would have to check you at my door. [laughs] Anyway, rambling, rambling.

MARTIN: All of this is interesting.

HALL: Well, it's just rambling. Anyway, I moved from, and I had always told John and Inez, I said and, I wish you could have known John. John was such a prince of a guy, he really really was a wonderful wonderful chap, and it was one of the best love affairs I ever... to the day he died they were lovers in the best sense of the word. He had a stroke and she took great, marvelous care of this guy right here in this house. And when they retired...

MARTIN: He should see her now, by the way. She is absolutely fabulous.

HALL: Well, I see her quite often, as a matter of fact, they were invited here to our Christmas party which we have every year, and Leland wrote and said they would do their best to get here and she got here the year before. Inez was always a fabulous dresser, and she's a wonderful, not only is she a stylish person, she's a fabulous cook. She would entertain, I would be here many many times, at holidays and birthdays and anniversaries and what have you. She could entertain so lavishly and. Well, again, I ramble but.

From 1367, when they retired, I always said now I want that house. She came to me and she said, "Now Joseph." She said, "You've always said you wanted this old place and you know that I'm in the business to make money." And she said, "Now I'm going to give you a price and a chance to buy it if you want to, if you're really sincere. And I don't want you to argue with it. I don't want you to question the price now. I'm not going to take a counter-offer. I'm not going to deal with that. I'm going to give you the rock-bottom and that's it." So she gave me a price of one-oh-eight. And she had spent, I think they paid, seventeen-five for this house. And she wanted one-oh-eight [\$108,000].

MARTIN: In what year? About?

HALL: That would have been in 1975. And I said, "But Inez dear." She said, "Don't. Don't. Don't. Don't come at me." And I said, "But it does need, the woodwork needs painting outside." I said, "Look at it, the paint is peeling." "Oh," she said, "well, I hadn't noticed that." But she said, "I'll tell you what. And no more arguing. I'll take off five thousand dollars and you have the thing painted yourself and do what you want to with it but that's it." And she turned on her heels and left me. So for one-oh-three, I got this house. [laughs] Oh, she's a doll. She really is a doll, and they're very fond of Inez Jones. OK, that brings us to this house, and pretty much the street scenes here and there.

MARTIN: And did you live there, at 1367 Mass.?

HALL: Oh I lived there from '69... at 1367? Sure, I lived there from, 1969 until I moved here, I bought this house in '75, moved here into this house in '76, because they took their good time in leaving. So I was on—at 1367 from '69 to '76. Then I came to this house and here I have been ever since.

Now let's talk a bit about churches. When I came to this—I have down here a little note about Ingram Congregational. That name would not mean anything to you but it is now this white church down here...

MARTIN: Oh yes, the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

HALL: ...where the Seventh Day Adventist Church is now. It was a Congregational church, it was called Ingram Memorial. It was a growing concern in the early '60s, but by the time I came here in the '70s...

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

MARTIN: You can proceed.

HALL: Well, we were speaking of Ingram Memorial Congregational Church. I have no idea who Ingram was but it was named for a person because it was a memorial to someone. In, as I was saying, in the early '60s, when I came here, it was attendable. The congregation was still there, I think, in smaller, smaller numbers.

MARTIN: Did the congregation, did they live here on the Hill or did they come in from the suburbs?

HALL: Well that's part of the interesting story. No, they lived here, pretty much, on the Hill. But then when I moved to this house, closer to Ingram, they were leaving. We have, let's face it, there was such a thing as white flight, and it did happen. I think much to the detriment of this city. If people had stayed and it had become, well, an integrated area as it hopefully is now, I don't think there would have been the deterioration of homes and the neighborhood but...

MARTIN: When did the white flight begin? Can you...

HALL: In the early '60s. And that—big time in the late '60s and big time in the early '70s and by that time, it was pretty much done and when I came here to this house in '76, that church was completely abandoned. They had let it go to rack and ruin and I went into that building and there were pigeons flying around and that big dome, the big, what you would call the meeting room, the major portion of that church. It's quite an attractive building.

MARTIN: And so well kept up now. Aren't you impressed?

HALL: So well kept up. I'm very impressed, but not one of those people lives in the District.

MARTIN: I know that, and they're willing to come in.

HALL: Well I said to some of them, here in this block the parking is atrocious on Saturday *and* Sunday, and I said to one of them, "Don't you people have churches in Maryland?" Oh, I thought they were going to throw me out of town.

MARTIN: Oh really.

HALL: Anyway, over there at the corner of Seventh and A [NE], where Unity is now, there was a church, and when I lived on A, at 708, there was a deck out back, out the kitchen, out the back. And we would have coffee out there on Sunday morning and go out back and hear the music from that church and by that time, it was "DUNK DUNK DUNK DUNK DUNK DUNK DAH. DUNK DUNK DUNK DUNK DUNK DUNK DUM." So it was an African church even at that time, so you see, the white flight had already started because these churches were all white at one time as you know. The Hoover Church, also, here on Capitol Hill, you know the Hoover Church? Well, it's called United Methodist, is that the one over there on Seward Square?

MARTIN: Mm-hmm.

HALL: Well, it was built in a block where stood a house in which J. Edgar Hoover lived for many many years. In fact, I think he was born in that house, don't hold me to that but, it was his childhood home, and that block was torn down for the purpose of building that present church.

MARTIN: I have never heard that story before. Is that well known?

HALL: Well, I would think so. At least I know it. And it was called, at that time, they referred to it pretty much, as the Hoover Church. And as a matter of fact, J. Edgar Hoover lived on out Branch Avenue in the last house before you hit the Maryland line, a lovely big brick home that sits up on a hill, and if you notice, just before you get to Southern Avenue, the very last house on the right, you go down Branch Avenue and you drop down a hill into Maryland on Branch Avenue going toward Marlow Heights. And there's a lovely lovely house in what is called Randall Highlands now, I think is the residential area, isn't it called Randall Highlands? I think so, of the city. That's not part of Capitol Hill. But anyway, he moved as an adult. He bought that house and lived there for a number of years. Out on Branch Avenue.

I'm thinking also of schools. I was in the old Hine Building. The old Hine Junior High School. And it was called Horrible Hine, have you ever heard that?

MARTIN: Oh yes, when we came here it was called that...

HALL: Well, it , that referred to the building because the building was horrible. The building is where the playground is now. And the playground is where the building is now.

MARTIN: I see.

HALL: And it was an old wooden type building inside. I remember splintery old floors and that. I was in there because that's where you went, in this neighborhood, to have the first polio vaccine. They held those clinics in schools and Hine was used, and I remember Hine was quite ugly and horrible inside.

MARTIN: Ugly because of—was built late, not during the early 19th century and was...

HALL: It was run down. I would have to say it was quite run-down.

MARTIN: Would it ever have been a beautiful building?

HALL: No, not what we would call beautiful. It would have been a utilitarian useful building and it was still being used. But they did tear it down because interiorly, it was a wreck. Now it stood where the playground is now, right by that alley, you know there by Agnes Anilian, if you remember Agnes Anilian? [affirmative noises from Martin] Her little shop right there on the alley. Well right across, where that fence is now, that's where the building stood, and the playground was down at Pennsylvania Avenue, at the corner there, Seventh and Eighth, where the building now exists. So that was quite an improvement when that building was built.

MARTIN: Do you know about what year the new building was built?

HALL: That would have had to be in the late '60s. '67, '68, '69, along in there. They took the playground, I don't know what the children did at that time, but they built the new building before they tore down the old one, of course, and then when they tore down the old one they recreated a playground. Now Peabody, looked exactly like it does now on the outside, and that building was not allowed to deteriorate to the degree that Hine did.

MARTIN: Do you have any idea why? Closer to the Capitol? Congressmen sending their children there, anything like that?

HALL: I would, I have no idea. I would have to hazard the guess, just guessing, that because it was always a primary school, an elementary school, and when I came here it was K through six. But because it was, I think parents were more interested than junior high school parents might have been. And I think the PTA would have gone in and the parents would have lent a hand toward doing various fix ups and fund raisings and cake bakes and that kind of stuff, you know.

MARTIN: Room parents.

HALL: Right, right, exactly. That kind of covers the schools. Back to this hos...

MARTIN: Tell me about Eastern High. Do you have any comments about that, how that changed? Because usually when people report history of the Hill, they talk about the massive change of Eastern High which is a gorgeous building. Have you been in there?

HALL: Oh yes, yes, it is a gorgeous building and it is a twin to, is it Woodrow Wilson? I think it's a twin to Woodrow Wilson. They're two very handsome buildings such as Eastern, but I know nothing, really, about Eastern because, when I came here, that was not considered part of Capitol Hill.

MARTIN: Oh I see.

HALL: When I came here, the Hill ended at one time, going way back, at Second Street, as I said before. But then when I came here and people said, you moved beyond Sixth Street, into the seven hundred block of A? You went beyond Sixth Street, on the Hill? And then I told you the story about going beyond Lincoln Park. "Oh, you've lost your gourd!" So, that was not considered part of—it's now called Capitol Hill East, as you know, up by the river, but I knew nothing about it except that it was supposed to, at one time, have been a very fine school. As a matter of fact, in the pre-World War II days, the Washington, DC school system was one of the best in the nation. Bar none. And that's a provable fact. Dunbar for the black students, these others for the white students. They had PhDs running around in all these high schools teaching. There was good discipline, there was good study skills. Parents were supportive. Pre-World War II history of schools in this city sparkles, it really does. The schools were outstanding.

Back to the hospital over here for a second. I mentioned the houses that were there before the parking lot before the new houses. The third building was being built when I moved onto A Street, and I remember watching them move that taller building. The one at the corner of C and Seventh? You know, the tall building?

MARTIN: The free standing tall building?

HALL: The free standing tall building. Before that, the hospital consisted just of this curved part here, the original 1928 building and then the '53 building were joined together to form what is there now, and this '28 portion in this recent fight with the city about selling of that property. It was declared by the historic review board, Bose Bergman—that's not his name—Tersh... Boasberg is the head of that committee, don't ask me to say it again. Anyway, they declared the '28 building, although it's not a hundred years old to be historic because of the facade that's right across when you look at my windows and see the facade.

MARTIN: I know, but they still damaged that.

HALL: They did, by putting that crazy band on the thing.

MARTIN: Which serves no purpose. Actually, we saved, you know, we owned 707 Massachusetts and we bought it in '71. And...

HALL: 707?

MARTIN: 707 Mass.

HALL: You sold to the Hathaways!

MARTIN: I did. Yeah. Right.

HALL: Well I'll be damned.

MARTIN: Well, the marble in that fireplace that we put in and the overhang that looks like a marquee overhang?

HALL: Yes.

MARTIN: It looks like it had stained glass. It was black wrought iron and then stained glass on it, we put that in our fireplace, because it was just chucked out on the street. And we saved that. There was no interest.

HALL: When was that?

MARTIN: '71. Early '72 if not '71.

HALL: I was down at 1367.

MARTIN: Yeah. And we, in that restoration, we bought the house from a podiatrist who practiced at the hospital until '71 and he had his bookkeeper who lived upstairs who kept guns, two guns by her bed. And, we wonder about the bookkeeper, but anyway, the podiatrist gave us his two podiatrist chairs. We told him what we were going to do with the house and while we were doing that, talking about purchasing the house through Bill Creager, if you remember, Bill Creager with Houses on the Hill.

HALL: Yes.

MARTIN: Well it is he who found our house. Since we were interested in preservation, we went over across to the hospital and took as many of those fine pieces that we could. The workers didn't care. It

seemed like no one cared. And then when they put in that crown that serves absolutely no purpose whatsoever and was an architectural travesty, we could not understand it.

HALL: Well, I can add a bit to that. I should be interviewing you about what you just said, fascinating. But they did that when they built the tall building with those weird wings, those wings are windows that protrude from the building. They did that to join the three period buildings together. They wanted to make them look like one unity—unit. And so...

MARTIN: That's the cause for the ribbon.

HALL: Right. So they put that silly crown on there, that aluminum I guess it is. But I went through with Nancy Simpson and the committee that fought this tearing this down. I was down there at that hearing many many many times and we finally won and preserved this building over here, through Boasberg's good offices. But I watched them build that newer building, and that would have been in the early sixties. When they built that freestanding building. You know my notes are so random here, I'm rambling but maybe you can pull this together. Did you know Libby Sangster?

MARTIN: I sure did.

HALL: Well bless her old heart, I meet up with Barry Hayman every once in a while, her son-in-law, if you know that story. When I first came here, back to Pennsylvania Avenue, and I've skipped that part of that story, charging down through there. Libby Sangster's messy, scruffy, hard-to-get-through antique store was where the Hawk and Dove is now. Factual. Next door...

MARTIN: Now she has a sign up there, "established in 1960." So in 1960, her store was where...

HALL: ...Hawk and Dove is now. And it was a scruffy looking, they've dolled the front up as well as the inside. And the little sidebar, do you know the little sidebar?

MARTIN: Next to the Hawk and Dove?

HALL: Part of the Hawk and Dove now.

MARTIN: I don't really.

HALL: Well you go in the main door, and then there's a door that leads into just a very small sidebar. That was a cobbler's shop. That door was not through there, they were two little separate buildings.

MARTIN: I do remember the cobbler shop.

HALL: You remember the cobbler shop?

MARTIN: Yes, you would go down a couple of steps.

HALL: And they joined that all together and they put a fireplace back in there for the Hawk and Dove. And the Hawk and Dove now is a wonderful, well it's one of the established restaurants of the Hill. And at that time we, you couldn't eat on the Hill when I first came here. You took your life in your hand. You ate mainly in the Florida Avenue and please [apparently addressing Martin who is eating a snack] raisins are good for you too. Those are a nice mix together. Smitty makes those. We had company the other day and we had bowls of those out. You went for a decent meal, you went to Florida Avenue Market, from the Hill. There was the Cannon Steakhouse, which was outstanding, it was outstanding. You see, Florida Avenue still has green grocers, fishmongers, meat shops and that sort of thing, to a lesser degree than they did in those days, but it was a big city market such as Eastern Market is now. And they had built in over there Cannon Steakshop, Cannon Steakhouse. Wonderful, wonderful place. And there was an Italian, what was the name of that, still there, at the corner as you go into the Florida Avenue Market, from the Florida Avenue side on, what would that be, Third Street, Fourth Street?, Third Street. An Italian place that was absolutely wonderful. It was romantic, they had candles, they had a strolling fiddler, they had the whole works and it was a beautiful. That's where you went to eat. There was nothing to eat, we had no place to eat on the Hill. We're fortunate there are so many places.

MARTIN: Until when?

HALL: Well, the Hawk and Dove went in there, and do you know how it got the name, Hawk and Dove?

MARTIN: I imagine it was, I thought perhaps the Hawk and Dove was established just before the Vietnam War or during the Vietnam War.

HALL: You're absolutely right. There were the hawks and there were the doves, under Johnson. And they picked up a guy by the name of Long and Lang—bought that building and started the Hawk and Dove—I think, one of them still has some interest in it. Anyway, it was a spoof on the Hill, but the name stuck and now it's quite, quite an institution here on the Hill, but at that time it was, “oh, he's a hawk, oh he's a dove.”

MARTIN: And we knew exactly who those people were.

HALL: [Laughs] OK, that gets that little one covered. The houses on the Folger lot we mentioned. When I first came here in 1960 to live in the city, having lived two years in College Park. Finally finishing up years later, all the work I did there, but anyway. They were tearing down the East Front of the Capitol. Do you know about that? Well, that's a fascinating national story, but it certainly is important to Capitol Hill. Old GW had the builders of the Capitol go out in Virginia and they got sandstone, there was a sandstone

quarry out close to Aquia, I think it was. And they got sandstone and made the columns for the east front of the Capitol and by the fifties, late forties, fifties, sixties, the sandstone columns on the east front of the Capitol were rapidly deteriorating. Congress saw fit to spend our money mightily by redoing that, I can see it now. They said, "OK, while we're replacing these columns, let's make some more space." So they extended the east front of the Capitol out, thirty-some, I think it was 38 feet and gained much much more office space there, much more office space, and if you look at it today...

MARTIN: 38?

HALL: Thirty-some feet. I think it was 38 feet they brought it out.

MARTIN: Out east.

HALL: The east front. And if you look at it today, you can tell a difference in the color of that new protrusion and the new columns. They sent to Vermont and got real marble for those new columns. And when they took the old columns down, don't you know, they had these derricks just, what is now the east front, what is now torn up big time, putting in the underground. They just, the derricks just punk! And let them drop. And a lot of the capitals on the tops of those were broken and they just threw them into a batch there and then later, they said what to do. And they finally got some sort of rig or something and hauled them and dumped them into a ravine in Rock Creek Park. And this wonderful woman whose name was, oh isn't it awful to tell a story and not know her name, Stella something, I think it was. Anyway, this wonderful woman said for years she said, "This is a disgrace! This is part of our early history. These columns stood for many many years upholding the front of our Capitol, and they're just down here molding away." Do you know where those are now?

MARTIN: That's in the Arboretum isn't it?

HALL: Exactly. Those are the Corinthian columns they were able, they finally listened to her. We owe her a medal of honor.

MARTIN: Stacy, Stacy somebody. Is that what you said?

HALL: I don't, don't quote me. I just read, I thought her name was Stella something.

MARTIN: Oh Stella. OK.

[ed: according to the National Arboretum website, the woman was Ethel Garrett.]

HALL: I don't know, I don't know. We'd have to look her up. But anyway, we owe her a debt of gratitude because it's a beautiful sight, when you come up on that site over there, [doorbell rings].

Smitty'll get it. But that is the true story. And if you go up into there and look at those you can see that the sandstone was wearing away. I think they did a little bit of repairing and they saved one of the Corinthian capitals, the top of the column. And it's now put on a big display stone this side of the grove of columns, have you seen that? If you go in front of it...

MARTIN: There's a little hill.

HALL: Right, before you go down to the columns themselves. They found one of the capitals you know the Corinthian capitals, without a column, and so they enshrined it on a pedestal this side of the columns and then you walk down, and then the pool and so on. But that's a true story of that, and that was being done when I first came here. And if you look carefully at the East Front, you will see the new marble. They brought, instead of out like this [gesticulating], as it was, they brought it out like this [gesticulating] and then put the new columns on the front and sides, but they gleaned a lot of new space, and if you go in there, on the interior, you can tell that you're walking from an older period of the Capitol to a newer period. But they did it quite tastefully. You don't notice too much difference. And they had a time in the sub-sub basement. You know, that's a wondrous building, if you've ever been down in the sub-sub basement. They didn't know what to do, whether to burrow it under there and underpin the new front or not, but I think they finally decided and poured concrete or put stone or something, they did not burrow it under there lest they thought later the new front would be in peril. They wanted it to be stable and sturdy so it was left without a basement, as I understand the story. But that was, that to me is a wondrous part of the Capitol Hill story, that those columns were finally rescued and should never have been thrown out in the first place. I don't object, there was no harm in replacing them but then they should have been given some place of honor because George [Washington] himself said, "Go make columns out of that quarry down there." And how dare they defy George! [Laughs]

MARTIN: [unintelligible]

HALL: Let's see, we've talked about East Capitol Street. Somehow I've dwelt on the streets.

MARTIN: Talk about Eastern, Eastern Market. Were the issues the same then that they are today?

HALL: Eastern Market is exactly the same and these idiots, tell them I said so, who will not decide what to do, why there's such a 30 year fight as to what to do to preserve. Do you know at one time there were eight markets in this city. Old Central Market was where the east end of the Federal Triangle is now, if you can imagine the Federal Triangle, the east end. And it extended from Pennsylvania Avenue back into what is now Constitution, or B Street, for quite a way. And it was a riot. The fish were spoiling, the meat was spoiling and yet you went and got it and boiled the thing for a whole day and you finally [laughs] that'll do. [laughs] Anyway, there was it, and there was a K Street Market, there was, the O Street Market

is still there. Eastern Market is one of two out of eight left. And it was the supermarket of that day. That's where you went like down to the Safeway now. Smitty, come join us! [SMITTY: No, you go ahead.] Oh, he doesn't like the old professor talk.

MARTIN: Well, you're going to read the transcript then!

HALL: Honey, nobody will ever be able to transcribe all of this nonsense. Anyway, I did not dwell on the portion of East Capitol Street that—at the corner of Sixth where there is now a nursery, that was once a Catholic girls school called St. Cecilia's.

MARTIN: Oh yes. St. Cecilia's. And we tried to save that.

HALL: And we tried to save that. We tried to save, were you here? Say, you've been here as long as I have, I gather.

MARTIN: '71. We came in '71. And then we went back to Alaska for a couple of years.

HALL: I see.

MARTIN: Yes, somebody will be interviewing me in a couple years.

HALL: I would love to do it. Now, St. Cecilia's...

MARTIN: [overlapping] OK, that's it. But St. Cecilia's, that was not that long ago and the school tried desperately to save it but they just didn't have enough students.

HALL: And they combined it, as I remember, with a boys school somewhere and tried to make a go of that. I'm not just sure what happened there. Were you here when they tore the houses down at the corner of Fifth and East Capitol?

MARTIN: Remember that was on Channel Seven that night?

HALL: I was one of the ones that sat down in front of the bulldozer!

MARTIN: So was I! Then we have a picture of you with that huge guy driving the bulldozer with the hard hat on.

HALL: I don't remember the huge guy, but I remember the thing coming.

MARTIN: Did you save the photo from the newspaper?

HALL: I don't remember.

MARTIN: It was on television, I remember that. And that would be 1972.

HALL: Well, I was on A Street at that time, and I thought, well, what a shame, what a shame, what a shame. But they finally won and tore it all down and now there are houses again. Just as up here on Seventh Street, there were houses, torn down, parking lot, now houses again.

MARTIN: And gorgeous houses.

HALL: Deja vu.

MARTIN: That's a wonderful block to live on. With Jimmy T's across the street and Congressional Market and Eastern Market there.

HALL: And these houses up here are no slouches. You know, they're going for seven and eight and nine [hundred thousand dollars]. They're quite wonderful houses inside. But anyway, that covers that.

MARTIN: Tell me more about Mary's Blue Room. Do you remember, did you go in Mary's Blue Room before?

HALL: I remember Mary's Blue Room, but I was never in there very much.

MARTIN: Was it a restaurant, or?

HALL: It was a restaurant, right, of sorts. And Jimmy T's was a restaurant. Now, Cindy's father, who is now in Florida, ran that thing. It's exactly as it was then, it's exactly. And how the hell the department doesn't get those people. Do they ever inspect that place? [whispering] I don't know. I'm very fond of Cindy.

MARTIN: I love going there.

HALL: And she has wonderful little kids. I'm very fond of her children and her but.

MARTIN: Oh and she knows too.

HALL: She would be a good person to interview too.

MARTIN: That's exactly right.

HALL: Because she knows that whole thing. And she grew up here, she's now, I guess Cindy's forty-something.

MARTIN: Sure.

HALL: But she grew up right here, I think she was born here, unlike most of us who are not native.

MARTIN: What's her last name, or what was her maiden, what was Jimmy T's last name?

HALL: You shouldn't have asked me, I can't tell you. He was just always Jimmy T. Now there was before them, I think that was a, was that a little drug store, an apothecary? I think that was an apothecary shop before Jimmy T got it. Because if you look up, it was quite, it must have been quite a wonderful building. The tin ceiling in that main room is still very outstanding. It's covered and then it comes down the wall a bit, about a foot or two, down the wall. It's a shame that the place, if you look at the floor, there are rat holes in the floor and all that, it's just. I have teased her a number of times, would you sell me this house. That's an enormous building, and it would make a wonderful house. But do you know, at the time the Hill was developing, late, mid to late 1800s or early 1900s, this house is 1910, it was zoned so that there were little mom and pop markets on corners. Because you had no way of going, they would go and get the freshly slaughtered chickens and put them on a block of ice in the markets and you would scurry by there and get your chicken and scurry home, fix it real quickly because people did not have refrigeration.

And as a matter of fact the little house right across the street that's now a cute little small home [ed: southeast corner of 8th Street and Massachusetts Avenue NE] was built as a market. It was an apartment, the plan was apartments above, the owner would live above, and it was called the Fox Economy Market.

MARTIN: Fox Economy?

HALL: Fox Economy Market was the name of that little...

MARTIN: And that was before it was the Chinese place.

HALL: Chinese takeout. And then Helen somebody bought it and put in a Chinese restaurant and then these latest people got it. These awful, awful people who last had it. And then they finally went back to Hong Kong. Oh, she was nasty! The man was pretty decent, but the woman was, she was atrocious.

MARTIN: And how long did they have it? Is that the family that put their four sons through medical school? Or that's a myth anyway.

HALL: I think that was Helen—what was her name? See there were two different Chinese places in there. Helen Wu and then this other one, they didn't use their family name but they reared a son and daughter in that building. But you would go in, the once or twice that I went in there, she would be on the counter waiting. Is it your rolls? Spring rolls. Are they shrimp or beef? iFjkl bkjklj; [gibberish] She was, oh, she was vile!

MARTIN: She punished you.

HALL: I, for asking any question, because you see, she was resistant to English. They would...

TAPE 2/SIDE 1

MARTIN: This is Nancy Martin. I'm interviewing Dr. Hall. This is the second tape, the second full tape, and the second interview on February 3. We did the first on January 9 and had so much material we decided we'd end that interview and come back and it's Monday morning, I'm in Dr. Hall's home here, on Eighth and Massachusetts, and he is ready to continue.

HALL: Yes, well thank you Nancy. When you came the other time, I had not had a chance to read your questions because you handed them to me on that occasion. But after you left I did go over your questions and I made a few little notes. Now, in order not to take too much of your time today, I'll just go through in one sentence answers, if that's ok with you. If then, you wish some elaboration on any item of which I am capable, then I'll be glad to do so.

OK, on your second page here you ask about how did you travel to your job. By car. Everyone had a car in those days, in the sixties and seventies, and oddly enough, I was working out of town so my commute was very very easy. I was going against the traffic. What was the transportation like? So far as I can recall, the transportation was good. We didn't have Metro but we had Capital Transit, at that time, and there was a real interesting character, as I recall, who owned Capital Transit, O. Roy Chalk. And Chalk fancied himself to be an aviator and he had a small puddle jumper airline, as I remember, and he worked the planes in the Caribbean taking people hither and yon. I can remember trolleys in the city as well. There were tracks all over and where the tracks were still there, and they'd put on buses, you would cuss them because it made driving uncomfortable. You'd have to drive over the tracks. There were two or three trolleys still running, I think the Georgia Avenue was still running when I first came here.

MARTIN: Again, this is in the fifties.

HALL: In the sixties.

MARTIN: Sixties, ok.

HALL: Well, late fifties, '58 I came into this area. Now, you ask about parking here, parking was ok. Nothing like the problem that it is now. I got rid of my car. Now that I'm retired, I don't really feel the need of a car that much for the insurance and the gas and all that, I can hop a cab every other day for the same money. Going on down your page two, we talked about where one would shop. I did speak about the various grocery stores. I think I did at that other occasion. In those days, Safeway had the policy of small stores but more frequently placed in neighborhoods.

There was a Safeway where that awful looking health building is now, across from Eastern Market. You know that health building, that weird looking building that should have never been allowed architecturally in that area. There was a Safeway that sat there, very small and at times, very understocked and sometimes rather messy. There was another Safeway that was built down here at Eighth and C [NE]. It had parking on the top of the store, that was a Safeway at that time. When they ceased operation as a Safeway on Seventh Street, across from the Market, that became the, that was the beginning of the flea market. They opened that building and let vendors go in there, and that was the genesis of the big flea market as we know it on the weekends today. There was likewise another Safeway on Seventh Street in the unit block of Seventh Street [NE], where those two big new houses were built right next to Context Realty. Ernie Antignani's place. That Safeway was the one at which I shopped most of the time, and it was a nice little store than the one across from the Market. During the riots, '68, that building was broken into. They broke big plate glass windows, stepped right in there and looted the place big time. It was never reopened as a grocery store.

MARTIN: Did you walk over there and see that, during the riots, did you see any of that personally?

HALL: I saw it, after it had been vandalized, yes I did. During the actual riots, the three or four days, Mayor Washington said, everybody, he called a curfew and he said, "Everybody get home, and you stay in your house from six o'clock on," I think it was six o'clock. And I did that. My house was just a half a block from that Safeway. I was living at 708 A, just around the corner from that, where the Reeses are now. And I literally stayed in the house. I just felt that there was enough going on outdoors that I didn't have to add to it. So other than going to work during the daytime, I did not. Now, there was another store that I think you might find of interest. In those days the drugstores were all Peoples. Peoples Drug, Peoples. CVS took them over and they're scattered around. Do you recall, Nancy, in your neighborhood, you know the building that is between East Capitol to the north of East Capitol, between that and Massachusetts Avenue right down there? It's now a condominium.

MARTIN: Right, that was a drugstore. On this block? On your block, down there?

HALL: No, on Lincoln Square. At Lincoln Park, the big building that faces the park. From East Capitol to Mass. Avenue. That was a Peoples Drug Store. And it was vandalized during that period, that same riot of '68. They broke in there, ruined the place. The first floor of that building was a big Peoples Drug Store. The upstairs was always apartments. And then it sat there, derelict, vacant, for many many many many years and finally somebody reopened and redid as a condominium.

MARTIN: So in the mid-seventies, was it that long between '68 and '72 or '73?

HALL: It sat vacant from '68 the riots, for most nearly of 10 years, I would say. When did you come to town?

MARTIN: '71.

HALL: Well, what was that building at that time?

MARTIN: I don't remember that at all, because we were living right behind the Supreme Court.

HALL: Oh I see, you weren't in that neighborhood. Well, it sat there empty except for a few brave souls who continued to rent the apartments on the upper levels.

MARTIN: I see. I see.

HALL: Because it always had access to the upper levels, independent of the store. But then when they finally redid and somebody was very smart to take it over and redo it, some developer, I do not recall. It may have been Beau Bogan and his outfit, I don't recall. Beau Bogan, in his day, when I first came here, was the same kind of power that the Dentons later became in real estate.

MARTIN: That's interesting.

HALL: Now, moving on to your next question. We talked about Jimmy T's, we talked about the Tune Inn, we talked about Mary's Blue Room. Boone's Market, yes yes. [Laughs] It's still there, but we don't call it Boone's Market anymore. Sherrill's was another fascinating place. You'd love to go in there and get insulted. [unintelligible]

MARTIN: That's required.

HALL: We mentioned the Eighth Street...

MARTIN: Did you go into Sherrill's?

HALL: Sherrill's? Oh yes, yes, You'd love to go in there and you got the greasy eggs and bacon...

MARTIN: Oh, it was awful.

HALL: ...on Saturday morning and sat on those terrible booths.

MARTIN: And loved every minute of them.

HALL: Down the middle. And these old babes would come and, "What are you going to have? Now be quick about it, I'm in a hurry around here!" OK, we've talked about Peoples on Lincoln Park We've talked about the Safeways. On down to your question number, well they're all number ten on here. I've

made a little note about other stores. There's a very very interesting story about Stanton Park that I recall. On the northeast corner of Fourth and Mass Avenue. There's some new townhouses, between Fourth and Fifth, some older townhouses, and some newer townhouses, on the west side of that block. When I first came here, that was an enormous Esso Gas station. Now Esso was the predecessor of Exxon, and it was. Everybody went there because they were very handy, they had mechanics...

MARTIN: Full service.

HALL: ...grease and oil, but it was a terrible terrible looking place. It was greasy and run-down. There were a lot of places on the Hill like that. The Hill was not—it was a very ordinary redneck kind of an area. Just like, oh well, anything goes, you know, so spill the grease, don't bother, just step over it, you know, and that kind of stuff. Likewise, another store...

MARTIN: I want to picture this. The Esso station was on the north side of Stanton Park?

HALL: Yes.

MARTIN: OK, north side, where those beautiful new buildings are. Where the frame shop is, I think.

HALL: I think those are private homes along there. They're very large townhouses, brick townhouses.

MARTIN: But it faced right on the park.

HALL: It faced the park, yes. And the last half of that block, it's a short block between Fourth and Fifth, facing the park. And the west side of that block was where this—and you drove in, it was building up on stilts, and you drove in to get your gas and have your servicing done, and there was a floor above that. I think that was just offices or, I don't think that was living quarters.

MARTIN: And then, catty corner from that was...

HALL: Lee Funeral Home.

MARTIN: Right. And next to that was a veterinary's. A dog hospital. Began with "B."

HALL: Catty corner from?

MARTIN: Right next to where the funeral parlor was. Or two houses in. He closed in the seventies. You don't remember?

HALL: Oh yes, yes there was. There was a veterinary. I never had a pet so I didn't... There was...

MARTIN: Began with "B."

HALL: Here again, a [unintelligible]. It's not part of this immediate neighborhood, but H Street needs to be mentioned briefly. I had a friend who came from Cumberland, Maryland. She had been the assistant manager of a McCrory's five and dime store in Cumberland. They transferred her because they needed an assistant manager at the McCrory's store on H Street. I don't recall the cross street, maybe H and Ninth or maybe Tenth. But it was a very pleasant store. It was a very pleasant store. She was put in charge of the basement. It was a very very pleasant store. You walked in, main floor, nice staircase that went downstairs. And the pots and the pans and the sewing stuff and the thread and whatever have you stuff was down there. Likewise, it was ransacked big time in '68. In the meantime, she had been transferred to a McCrory's out at Seven Corners so she was not there at that time. But there was a very pleasant McCrory's five and dime store that was a theater out through there. I never did much shopping there, but it was a very pleasant area, prior to the riots, it really was. It still is not as pleasant as it was in those days. In other words, that's an area of the city which has not come back up and revitalized itself. Likewise, there was a five and dime store where that hideous building is now over here at Pennsylvania Avenue and Seventh.

MARTIN: Where Bread and Chocolate is?

HALL: Bread and Chocolate, right. That funny looking gray and green brick building has no business being on the Avenue whatsoever any more than that funny building across from Eastern Market but. There was a woman architect at that time who was kind of in cahoots with the city and she could get permits to do anything. She built the building up here at Stanton Park, Sixth and Stanton Park on the north side of that corner.

MARTIN: You don't know her name?

HALL: I don't remember her name. The first redoing she did was a small building, it was quite, it fits in pretty well. Small building she redid at the corner of C and Seventh, across from the south hall of the Market. Then she got hold of the five and dime Kresge that I mentioned, where there was a very large five and dime, Kresge's?

MARTIN: Woolworth's.

HALL: Woolworth's. [ed: Dr. Hall was correct; the store was Kresge's.] Yeah, McCrory's here and a Woolworth's there. And it closed and somehow she got that building, which was a one-story at that time. And she built the whole thing up as it is now. I think it was one-story. Anyway, it was a fairly decent kind of a country store.

MARTIN: With the loss of the Safeway and Woolworth's, it changed shopping right on the Hill, didn't it?

HALL: Well it did. It changed shopping a good deal. And we went without grocery stores for a long time. And the one down on Kentucky Avenue was crummy as could be for many many years and there was the liquor store by it and finally Safeway saw the wisdom in acquiring the building where the liquor store was and enlarging and remodeling the whole thing.

Going on down to your next page, you ask something about the schools. We mentioned Hine before, we covered that. You ask about private schools. I think most of the children in this area who attended private schools went to Georgetown Day, because at that time Capitol Hill Day was not the school that it is today. The Daniels children up here, Leah and Edward Daniels, the son and daughter of Judge and Mrs. Daniels, trudged for years. For years, I saw them daily trudging back and forth with those huge backpacks to get the Metro, the buses to Georgetown Day, and they both finished there.

You ask about the publications, local newspapers. There were no local papers when I came here. The Hill Rag and later the Voice, fairly new things here on the Hill. I took, originally, when I came here, I took the Star, The Evening Star, which was the competitor of the Washington Post. The Post was the morning paper, the Star was the afternoon paper. It was a very fine paper. It was a much more elegantly written paper. It had a lot of sophistication. Much more unbiased than the Post is today. The Post is very very biased and they make no bones about it, and that's their prerogative if they want to be that way editorially. They let that attitude creep sometimes into their news stories. But the Star was really a very—you don't think of newspapers as elegant, but it was—a very sophisticated, very readable paper.

The movie houses, I think we mentioned, Nancy, before. The local ones, there was one on H Street, as I said. Then I attended, and I think I mentioned, the Grand and the Penn. The Grand is no longer. The Penn is no longer, though they made them save the facade. That was about the beginning of preservation on the Hill. They made them save the front of that building because it was quite an art deco building. So they made them shore that up and they built the big building in behind it. Now where that Market Place is, across the street, is where the Grand was. And I remember a very interesting little anecdote of when they tore the Grand down to put in that building.

MARTIN: The Market Place?

HALL: The Market Place. They found what they thought to be the oldest Coca Cola outdoor sign on a building, on the building that was just to the west of the Grand that had been there and had been covered up when the Grand was built, apparently, and when the Grand was torn down there was the old sign in very pale lettering there on the other building. Now you mentioned...

MARTIN: And it is preserved now, isn't it? The Coca Cola sign...

HALL: I think it is. I think it's still there, right, right. Now you mentioned antique stores here, along the way. We mentioned Libby Sangster, and where her store was originally, in what is Hawk and Dove now. And there was a little cobbler's shop, I mentioned that. But that was over on Pennsylvania Avenue, before she moved to the Market area.

Community organizations. The Restoration—there were no arts groups that I can recall. Public service groups. Other than, I think, a Lions Club, here and there, or a Rotary, I think was here. But the restoration group [Capitol Hill Restoration Society] formed about that time. I belonged in the early, early days. And one of the characters of Capitol Hill was this Curley Boswell who headed it up for a long time.

MARTIN: Tell me about that.

HALL: Well, Curley Boswell was a man of many interests and many talents. He had his finger in a lot of pies. He owned a lot of real estate. He owned some very elegant houses here and about. And he was interested in restoration, and I don't think he started the Restoration Society, but he was the first outstanding president that they had who really began to push the idea of restoration. And, of course, restoration is a—to restore means to put it back exactly like it was and we don't do that. We modernize, but we remodel and preserve what we can today.

Police substations. What can you say about—not much. The one down here was not a substation. That was a small store of some kind, I think. Where the 1D1 is now. But it was not a substation at that time.

Northeast, Southeast Public Library. She asks. They were there, and I was in those buildings in those days. I also went, in my studies, I also used the Carnegie Library, which is there at Mount Vernon Square, as well as the Library of Congress. I had a card, a stack card in those days, for the Library of Congress. The Carnegie Library was very good, and a very interesting building, if you've never been in that building. I am delighted that someone is going to redo it and make it the Historic Society headquarters out of that. It's a lovely building.

MARTIN: That was difficult to get to, though, wasn't it? Because there certainly wasn't any parking, you just sort of swirled that building. How did you manage that?

HALL: I don't remember. I know I drove in. I drove there. I don't recall taking the bus there. I guess I just parked wherever I could and walked over there. In those days, the walking was no problem for me and the steps were no problem. Such as now. But the Carnegie Library, in its way, was quite good. Some of the collections were better than others. There was not the Washingtonian collection that we now have. Washingtoniana. They were strong, as I recall, that library was strong on early American history.

Now, you mentioned here what was Union Station like. At times, that place was terrible and they had so many changes of mind about it. And I thought the poor thing would never come round and get off the ground as it is now.

Another interesting place, I made a little note here, was Hechinger. Hechinger was always at the five points out here, at Benning Road and H Street and Bladensburg Road. And the original Hechinger that I remember was a small building which contained the hardware items and the cashiers and that. But then to get lumber, you went outside into a barn-like structure that was never heated. It was just a barn-like structure right on the ground. And you went down aisles and here were two-by-fours and here were four-by-eights and here were other kinds of lumber, siding and so forth. And you got what you wanted or told them. And then you went into this small building and paid. But you didn't go there much in the wintertime because it was a very unheated. Finally, they got modern enough to the point that they would let the lumbermen, you could go in and order what you wanted and they could bring it out to you if you have a truck to take it. Out of this old barn that was cold.

MARTIN: What I remember is, most of us were renovating or, we thought, restoring houses, at that time. So Saturday mornings we'd be either at Frager's or at Hechinger's. It was just a standard. That's where we'd be.

HALL: Yes! Oh yes. And Frager's was, and still is, a marvel. You know, it takes you back a hundred and fifty years. I love to go in Frager's.

MARTIN: You what?

HALL: Love to go in Frager's. OK... moving on down. Spent time in the Library of Congress. Now, you say, what was the Navy Yard like? The Navy Yard, when I came here, was pretty much abandoned for the purpose for which it was built. When Capitol Hill, for instance, when this house was built, the Navy Yard was a big source of employment. The big employers, at that time, were Federal government and the Navy Yard. People who lived in this area generally worked either on the Hill as some sort of a clerk or other, or at the Navy Yard. And most of these older houses were homes of the just common people who worked at the Navy Yard. You know, these were not elegant homes at all. I have, in my collection here, best addresses that are no longer, *Washington Lost?*

MARTIN: Right.

HALL: In the block where the Folger Library is now. I have a picture of that block. It was the most elegant block at that time, for a few years, in the city. When they first started the residential part of the city, they thought that it would grow east of the Capitol. That was not to be. But some builder did build

some beautiful, three-story, and raised basements, English basements. In that block. And it was a very handsome, handsome block. Stone, the first two floors, as I recall. Brick above that. Very elegant houses that were torn down later for the Folger Library. But that was even before my time, if you can believe it.

OK, moving on down. Were there concerts at the Supreme Court? Library of Congress? Marine Barracks? The concerts that I remember were at the Watergate. You would go down and sit on those steps and a barge would come in and bring the Marine Band or the Navy Band or the National Symphony, at that time, was just getting started. It was not really very good, but, you know, everything has to start someplace. The art galleries, the Mellon was there. The original art gallery on the Mall, and of course, the East Building was built in our time. Botanical Garden, yes, was there. It's had its ups and downs, and finally it has been restored. What was Eighth Street like? What was Pennsylvania Avenue like? We talked about Pennsylvania Avenue. Eighth Street was very scruffy, as one block down there still is, several blocks still are. And I'm hoping that they can really do something, but Eighth Street was very very scruffy.

I talk about Seventh, I've mentioned Eastern Market enough here. Independence Avenue, I mentioned the Adams Building was torn down [correction: houses were torn down to build the Adams Building] and the people who lived next door when I came here had lived in a house in the block where the Adams Building is now. And they loved that part of town. They claimed Independence Avenue as their home 'til the day they died. Even though they had to leave there. Likewise, I think I mentioned to you...

MARTIN: And that was fairly recent. That was in the seventies, wasn't it, when that was torn down? Those houses?

HALL: Oh no, no, no. You're thinking of the Madison Building. The Adams is the second library. It's the very plain, little building that sits immediately to the east of the original Jefferson Building. The Jefferson is the lovely big original building. Then they...

MARTIN: But this family had lived right behind the Jefferson Building, where the Adams...

HALL: Right, right. There were townhouses there. Big old townhouses. In other words, they lived right across from what is now Trover's Shop. Faced. And she always said, "That big brass door there on the Adams Building, that's where our house was. They took our house!" She was such an interesting character, next door.

MARTIN: Where did she go? She's not alive now?

HALL: Oh no, no. The Truseim sisters, two old maids. The nephew, who is now about my age, inherited the little house next door. But the two old maids were real Hill characters. They really were.

MARTIN: Tell me more about them. Anything.

HALL: Well, the one. There was Margretta and Eva. Eva was one of the first female school principals appointed in the District of Columbia. And this was in the late nineteenth century, because she lived into the seventies. And she was, at that time, well into her nineties. And then the younger sister, Margretta, lived for a number of years more. They were very very interesting women. In the early days, they would get out and work in their yard. They were very opinionated about things. I mean, any issue, you had no question as to where they stood. They would come right out and tell you, "Well, this president stinks, he's doing the wrong thing. I don't like this man."

MARTIN: How do you spell their last name? Can you sound it out?

HALL: T-R-U-E-... I'd have to look it up, my dear, in my book. T-R-U-S-E-I-M. Truseim. And they always claimed that they were Alsatian. German. French-German, that area of France and Germany, right in between the two, in the northern part of France, Alsatian part there. And they said, "Our name is quite French." Truseim. Truseim.

OK, Constitution Avenue. Much the same, only some upgrading. Well, you recall, of course, when this was a parking lot over here. These houses were built about three years ago. Constitution Avenue has not changed that much, come to think about it. Down here in the nine hundred block, this little house that was occupied by the serving lady, who served as the clean-up maid for the Truseim sisters. A woman, very very interesting woman, you would love to talk with her. Eleanor Meischour. And that little house of hers stood there. It's a nineteenth century building. Stood there. You can see it now.

MARTIN: Is that the single building?

HALL: No, no, down here in the nine hundred block.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 1

TAPE 2/SIDE 2

HALL: No, dear, we're talking about Constitution. Constitution.

MARTIN: Constitution, OK.

HALL: Which, in those days...

MARTIN: This is Eleanor Meischour's house.

HALL: Eleanor Meischour. And I think I still maybe have her name in my old phone book. I could look it up for you. Maiden lady who was known as the “walking lady” in this neighborhood. And she was known as the “serving lady.” She had been a nun in early years and was very, servile, I guess would be the word. Very deferential. And she had that little single house that sat on three lots [ed: 920 Constitution Avenue NE]. You would remember it, Nancy. Down here, a little ramshackle wooden house with a little front porch on it, sat there for many many years, with a vacant lot here and a vacant lot here. And this Camero, Mario Camero, is building the new houses. He acquired the property somehow. The preservation review board made him save the wooden house. They would not let him tear that down. So he built around it and built a pleasant-looking townhouse out of it. And then on either side he built, with basements, unlike the original house, a house on each side [918 and 922 Constitution Avenue NE]. And they’re now for sale. They may have been sold. But you can go down there and take a look at those.

MARTIN: I’m going to walk that way on my way home!

HALL: Yeah. OK. Now you speak here of doctors and dentists on the Hill. I always used a dentist in Northwest because a friend of mine had pointed me in that direction when I first came here. But as far as a general practitioner, Dr. Gay was the physician of choice here. She had a practice on East Capitol and was a very very fine woman. I never did go to her but many many many residents here on the Hill did. Lawyers. I never had an occasion to use a lawyer other than somebody at a closing or, real estate settlement when you buy property. But Jack Mahoney was a leading Hill kind of lawyer that people used.

DC Government. You ask a question about that. When I first came here, there were commissioners. We did not have a mayor. That happened after I came here. Walter Washington was appointed after I came here. Not elected, but appointed. We had commissioners, and I remember the chairman of the commissioners. There were three commissioners, going way way back. Old Boss Shepherd, for whom Shepherd Park is named and who did so much for the city but broke the city royally. But he put in sewers and streets and streetlights. The city was a mess before Shepherd took over. He was head of Public Works and he really did pull this city together. He got no thanks for it because they ran him out of office and nearly out of town. But following that, there were other commissioners, and when I came here, Tobriner, a guy by the name of Tobriner, was the chairman of the commissioners, and Hechinger, the original John Hechinger, was a commissioner. And one other whose name I cannot recall.

MARTIN: Who was the second one you said, Briner?

HALL: Tobriner. T-O-B-R-I-N-E-R. And I can’t think of Tobriner’s first name. But these were all very upstanding citizens of the city, and who had the interest of the city at heart. They were appointed, at that time, by the president with the consent of Congress to run the Federal City. And in those days, the city

was run much better than it was later. We did not have a lot of the problems. Then, of course, Home Rule came in and with that, and it continues to this day, unfortunately. Cronyism, corruption here and there, you name it. But the commissioner form of government, when I came here, seemed to me to be rather honest and rather efficient.

Where did most of the congressmen and senators live? If they lived at all on the Hill, they lived here and there. There are more living here now than were then because the Hill has, quote, come up. But their staffers lived here. Many many many many staffers. There were staffers living in this house. As a matter of fact, you met Inez and her husband, John. Dear John Jones was the administrative assistant, as head staffer, for the senator from Oregon when he first came here. So, he was an example of staffers living here.

Famous people living on the Hill. Oh my. Roberta Flack, I would have to say, would be one of the famous people at that time. Curley Boswell. I can think of Barbara Held and her husband, Bob Reich. There was a very older woman named Battle Railey who was—and that was her real first name.

MARTIN: Battle?

HALL: Battle. Battle Railey. She was one of the first women anywhere on the Hill to be licensed to be a realtor. And she did a lot of selling of the older places that were put up for renovation.

Town characters. Ha!

MARTIN: Besides you.

HALL: [Laughs] I guess I am now.

MARTIN: Yes you are!

HALL: Henry Yaffe would certainly be one of them. And he is still living and he is very very feeble and in bad shape. Libby Sangster.

MARTIN: Where does Henry Yaffe live and why was he a character?

HALL: Oh, you don't know Henry Yaffe?!

MARTIN: No!

HALL: Oh, honey, well Henry Yaffe is the "Mr. Henry."

MARTIN: I see.

HALL: The Mr. Henry who did so much for the restaurant scene in this city. There's an interesting story, did I tell you, about his connection with Libby Sangster?

MARTIN: Go ahead.

HALL: They were great good friends. And when he acquired what was then the 601, a run down, terrible looking redneck bar, where Mr. Henry's is now, Henry Yaffe said, "Hmm. Well I'm going to do something with this place," and he decided—it was very popular in those days, Victorian pubs was the thing in New York City, he had found out, you know. So he thought he would bring New York City to the wilds of Washington, you know. So he acquired that building, put in a new kitchen which is still very small and very inadequate. How they do what they do, I don't know. And he had his friend, Libby Sangster, come over there. I was in on some of that, because I was there one day when she was decorating. He must have said, "Now, Libby. Victorian. I want you to pull out all the old Victorian stuff you've got in this old place you have here, and you bring it down here and we'll just hang it up." And that's how all the stuff that's hanging on the walls now, gathering dust, through the years, happened. She came over there and Henry Yaffe would climb up and she would say, "No, a little to the left," and "Put a nail there," and "OK, hang it there. Hang it there."

Libby Sangster, and for many many years, Nancy, her picture, if you can recall, in the window of Mr. Henry's. There was a picture of a woman. Do you remember that? Beautiful face. Libby Sangster had a beautiful face. But a very weird body. It was almost as though her legs grew out of her armpits. I mean her body was so, so compact and so short but a beautiful face. And when she was young, she was an artists' model. And Henry Yaffe came by one of these pictures of her as a young woman, facial pictures. He put it on the body of a—Henry Yaffe is a great prankster, one of the great pranksters. He put it on Theta Bara's body, cut out the face of Libby Sangster. I think it was Theta Bara, an old silent movie star. I'm pretty sure of that.

MARTIN: Is it still hanging there?

HALL: You go in there and ask him.

MARTIN: We've got to go look.

HALL: Ask him where that is. It's no longer there.

MARTIN: OK, what did he do with it?

HALL: What did you do with the woman's picture. It was a large, large advertisement-like. It was a large cardboard-like display.

MARTIN: Could you see it from the street?

HALL: Oh yes. It was in the window, right on Pennsylvania Avenue side of the windows there as you pass the front. And there were windows on the side there and the benches that are there to this day came from the National Presbyterian Church when it was torn down. There just off of M Street and was moved way out on, what, Wisconsin Avenue? But they got the benches that were in that old church. To put into Mr. Henry's. So he really did, he really was a character and did an awful lot for—he was an inspiration for other restaurants to upgrade. Then we got the Hawk and Dove kind of based on that idea. Several others. And then Henry Yaffe expanded. There was a Mr. Henry's at Washington Circle. There was one put at Tenley Circle. The one in Georgetown, the Mr. Henry's in Georgetown was really quite an elegant place, there on Wisconsin Avenue. OK.

MARTIN: And is this the only one that's operating as...

HALL: That's the only one that's left operating as Mr. Henry's, you're absolutely right.

Major scandals on the Hill. Oh my. Well, other than scandals on yours truly, the one...

MARTIN: Start with that!

HALL: [Laughs] No no no no.

MARTIN: Let's not wait for that.

HALL: The one that I recall most vividly was when the fan dancer, strip tease, what do we call her, jumped in the Tidal Pool, Tidal Basin? That actually happened. Wilbur Mills was a sanctimonious old senator in town from somewhere and.

MARTIN: Fanne Fox. Fanne Fox, wasn't it?

HALL: Fanne Fox, right! Right, Fanne Fox. He was a notorious drunk. And he was roaring down the avenue one day, over there in Northwest, coming hard upon the Tidal Basin [doorbell rings]. Smitty'll get it. And the police got after him. For speeding, I guess, I'm not too for sure. But she literally opened the door, she said, "Slow down, slow down." She literally opened the door, in order not to be caught by the police with him, because she had a terrible reputation. I mean, she was known as everything for which a woman should not be known. And she actually jumped in the Tidal Basin and it was a real hoot. It was a real hoot.

Political issues. At that time, when I came here, statehood has always and will always be. I personally am not for statehood, but I am for annexation to another state. I am for giving us—we're not really big

enough to be a state and I don't think of it as a state. But I think we should be given back to Maryland, perhaps, or in some way given status where we would have representation in the Senate and the House. Unlike what we have now. Or else, let us stop paying the federal income tax, such as the case with Puerto Rico. You know, they have territorial status, part of the Commonwealth. But they don't pay federal tax. Oh! Packages. But anyway, statehood was an issue.

Korea was an issue. Going back into the fifties. Sixties, Vietnam, an issue. You name it. There's always been. And of course, it's the seat of federal government so federal issues and international issues will always be paramount here in the city because this is where it all ends up.

Now, you speak here of other major issues, renovation. Yes, big, big issue. Renovation, thank goodness, came big time on the Hill. Crime. During my time, has become a worse problem. When I first came here, I do not recall the degree of concern for, concerning crime. Moving. DC government, we discussed that. Taxes. City tax has always been very high because of this weird, weird arrangement we have with the federal government. We're neither state nor city nor anything else. We are an anomaly all on our own, so therefore has had—do you know that over fifty percent of the land acreage in this city cannot be taxed by this city? Forty-three percent because of the feds, and...

MARTIN: And the churches.

HALL: And eleven, by universities and churches and other agencies which are not taxed. If the city could tax every acre in this city, we would not have the tax burden which we have now. And the local tax. Department of Motor Vehicles. Very inefficient, back as far as I can remember.

Race relations on the Hill. Until '68, very good. I do not recall any discord. I moved into a house on A Street Northeast, 708, and there were black people living on either side, back to the whole block, other than myself was black. Across the street, some of those were white people. There was no problem whatsoever. Neighbors helped neighbors out. I can recall Mr. Carr, immediately to the west of my house there, became very ill one day, I think it was on a weekend, and Mrs. Carr, the wife, came over and said, "My husband is very very ill. He needs help. Could you help us? Could you help us?" I don't know whether she called, we didn't have a 911 I guess, I don't know what she had done. Anyway, a friend of mine and I went right over, we took him by the arms and we walked him over to Casualty Hospital. We walked the man right over there, they took him in, and I guess it was high blood pressure or something. But I've always remembered that, an act of kindness that I would have done in a flash for anybody, for anybody. And he would have done this for me, I'm sure.

MARTIN: Had you been in their home before that?

HALL: Yes. I had.

MARTIN: So she knew to call upon you?

HALL: Oh yes, yes. We were neighbors. We were old time neighbors like you think of a neighbor as being helpful, you know.

Do you know anything about real estate practices on the Hill? Yes. There was a whole cadre of real estate agents and who were in with the developers. Beau Bogan particularly. Barbara Held, particularly. They would seek out, they would seek out people who would want to buy with the view of renovating, and they made especially, somehow they could find these people. Such as myself. As a matter of fact, Inez Jones was in on that to an extent, and she sold me the 708 A Street house as well as this house. And 1102 East Capitol. And I bought 1367 Mass. Avenue from her. And these people, there was Battle Railey in the early days, Rhea Radin was a big big star in those days. Barbara Held. And who's the little woman still over here at Formant? She is still working.

MARTIN: Chatel?

HALL: No. Millicent Chatel was another leading light of the realtors. I can't think of the woman's name, it'll come to me in a minute. But these people were quick to seize upon the idea of selling properties for renovation and they went big time. And the movement just kept on and on and on. I think I told you before, when I first came here and bought a house in the seven hundred block, people said, "[gasp] Ah, you bought east of Sixth Street?! How dare you?!" And then I bought east of Lincoln Park, and again, they said, "How dare you?" And how glad I am that I dared, you know. OK, I'm coming to the end of your questions.

MARTIN: Do you remember how much you sold the house for, on Mass, thirteen hundred block of Massachusetts Avenue?

HALL: I brought it for thirty-two five. It had had a lot of renovation done. It was a two unit. It's a double house. It's a beautiful house to this day. It's the house sitting out there with those two lions sitting up on.

MARTIN: Oh yeah.

HALL: That was my home for many many years. Where I moved from 708 A. I sold it to the Furnesses, Brian and Charlotte Furness. I bought it for thirty-two five. It had beautiful renovated baths in it, I remember. And I sold it for two twenty.

MARTIN: In what year?

HALL: I sold that house.

MARTIN: Must be in the early seventies.

HALL: I bought it in 1969. And I sold it, let me think, about the time. I didn't sell it right away after I moved out of it to this house. I moved from there to here. But I kept it as a rental. I had two tenants in there. At one time, I had a press secretary of, to Senator Muskee, living in that building. And this chap was from Maine. A guy by the name of Bob Rose. I sold that in the [clicking noise] eighties? Mid-eighties, I think it was, would have been. OK.

MARTIN: And now it would be eight or nine hundred thousand.

HALL: You could get more for that house now because it's a beautiful. It has the biggest living room I have ever seen on Capitol Hill.

Changes that you approve of on Capitol Hill. The stores, the restaurants, all the renovation that's going on.

Who else should be interviewed? You should try to get Henry Yaffe, while he's still living. And has anyone interviewed Tom Kelly?

MARTIN: Tom Kelly is...uh, yes.

HALL: Because you know, he's native. He was born here, unlike a lot of us. Now, when you were here before, Nancy, I had made some notes, not realizing you were going to bring your good list of questions. I got through the first page. Now let me go to the second page and I'll try to be really brief. I spoke of the Washington Coliseum over here, off of Florida Avenue, Third and M?

MARTIN: Yes, yes.

HALL: I spoke of that. And I was there the first time the Beatles ever appeared in the United States. 1963? The first concert, and I remember paying four dollars.

MARTIN: [Laughs] This is great!

HALL: It was the first concert they ever had. That was our MCI Center at that time. I mean that was, you know, the Uline Arena. That was the Washington arena. We mentioned the Florida Avenue marketplace. We mentioned H Street and McCrory's. Over in that area of the Washington Coliseum was one of the Marriott root beer stands. I can't tell you the exact address, but it was on Third Street, close to the Uline Arena. The Marriotts opened a root beet stand in several spots in the city. And of course, that later became the big Hot Shoppes operation and the Marriott hotels and that. But the Marriott started over there

with just this little storefront root beer soda jerk place. You'd go in and get a soda in a cup. And you could get a glass and stay there and give them back the glass, or you could get a paper cup. And as I remember, the paper cup in those days was cone shape. Unlike the paper cups we have now. Eastern Market we've spoken considerably about that. The theatres we've talked about.

I wish he was still living. One of the characters—we mentioned the characters—Jim Locke.

MARTIN: Oh yes!

HALL: Jim and Alice Locke were characters.

MARTIN: On Seventh Street, right?

HALL: Seventh Street. The Mayor of Seventh Street. As I am the mayor of Massachusetts Avenue...

MARTIN: Yes, you are.

HALL: And do you know, to this day, there is a little stone out in the tree box commemorating the residency of Jim Locke in that block.

We spoke of the Chalk buses here in town. See, I had written a lot of things down that you had anticipated with your questions. *The Washington Star*, Providence Hospital. I don't think I mentioned that when you were here before. Was down there on Third Street, where there's now a park? And it was a lovely, big, Romanesque, stone building, fortress-like, Richardsonian kind of a big, big, foreboding looking stone building that was later torn down and for many many years the wall around that whole block, do you remember? A granite wall. You had to go up a number of steps to get into the ground level of that hospital. It was set up on a hill, in other words. They eventually leveled that hill to put in the park that's there now. And then the wall and everything disappeared. And Providence was moved over into, way over in Northeast. Casualty we talked about.

Another interesting character, You'd say, well really not a character but a resident of the Hill. When I lived at 1367 on Mass. Avenue. The house is still a lovely yellow brick house down there was bought and renovated by Jim Vance, the anchorman? He and his wife at that time, they're no longer married, but they bought a house, and one of the most innovative things that anyone had done on the Hill. Several others of us have done it. Instead of going up five or six steps to get into the main level of the house, they took you straight into a foyer and then immediately you walked down to what was the English basement, or you walked up to what was the main floor. But the walking up or down, instead of being outside, was put on the inside. And you can see that house on, in the thirteen hundred block. Go by there and see it sometime. A yellow house, I think it's still yellow. But Vance did that, had that work done.

Oh, the Senators baseball. Griffith Stadium. Wow. That goes back a long time. The parks have come a long way, we mentioned that. We're lucky to have Stanton Park and Lincoln Park. Lincoln Park was real scruffy when I came here, really scruffy. And I think I mentioned the moving of the original statue and the placing of the Bethune statue in the early seventies. That would have been the early seventies. OK. Churches, we've talked about that to some extent.

MARTIN: Particularly, have you watched the history of the Seventh Day Adventist Church here?

HALL: That's on your prior tape. When I came here, on Eighth Street over here, that was a going white church. A lot of the neighborhood people would go to that church. It was called Ingram Memorial. It was a Congregational church. The denomination was Congregational. A denomination like Methodist, Baptist, what have you. They abandoned it in the white flight, and it went down, down. It was unoccupied for many many many many years. They let the roof go to rot. I told this story before, I'm repeating myself.

MARTIN: Yes. Yeah.

HALL: Anyway, it's wonderful to see that building come back because it is a lovely looking building. I regret the fact that they bring so many cars in here on the weekend but that's another issue. Carbery School, did I mention that to you before, Nancy?

MARTIN: No, tell me. Tell me about Carbery.

HALL: Well, Carbery School, like so many of the city schools, particularly the elementary and junior high schools, were quite good buildings when they were built. Some of them were quite elegant buildings, as Eastern is to this day. Wilson is to this day. Looked like college campuses really when you go down here and see Eastern. Carbery is in the four hundred block of Fifth Street, on the west side. It was abandoned as the city grew smaller and smaller. They had less need for schools because there were not students to fill them. It was closed up and finally somebody bought it from the city, as so many of the schools have been. And made condominiums out of, loft apartments, and that, it made a beautiful, if you've never been in there. It even looks grand from the outside. The four hundred block of Fifth Street, Northeast. Carbery School is quite an asset to the Hill and a good example of what can be done in the creative reuse of buildings. And I'm very much for that. Creative use of this old building over here, across from me. I would love to see something really done, creatively out of that. Other than just apartments. Another example is this church down on Ninth. Ninth and North Carolina, where they put in beautiful, beautiful condominiums in the church there, in that triangle.

We've spoken about Mass. Avenue and... Through the years, I met a family by the name of Kahlid. They were near Eastern, the Kahlid family. I think it was Jordanian. They, at one time, had a small shop,

sandwich shop, that became Steak in a Sack. That was the name of their shop. They had a Steak in a Sack. The sack was the pita bread as we think of it now. And they did this great steak, very thin, with onions, and they'd stuff it in there. And you'd go in and get it. It was very very good. They had a shop, interestingly enough, here in town. The dad had it downtown. And they lived in the store that is now The Brasserie. They lived in the apartment that is above that restaurant now. And they recalled, the older members of that family recalled when they knew that I lived here on the Hill, and I met them in later years through another connection. They told me a lot about that area of the city.

MARTIN: Would they be available for an interview, do you know where they are?

HALL: No, they would not be, because they are all gone. And the one that's left refuses to come into the city. "Oh, I would never never never come in." She's one of these—deliver me.

OK. Old Naval Hospital, I think we spoke of that. There's another sad sad situation that's sitting there going to pot and being neglected and something should certainly be done. Now, my dear, I have talked your ear off, but if you have questions.

MARTIN: I think this is absolutely fabulous

HALL: [Laughs]

MARTIN: And I want to hear more about yourself, and your own scandal. Here's your chance!

HALL: [Laughs] There are no scandals in my life.

MARTIN: Yes there are.

HALL: My life has been a good good one. I'm North Carolinian, I was born in Asheville. My father was British, was born in Wakefield in Yorkshire. My mother was a North Carolinian. They met in school, as a matter of fact, and married. I was very very lucky in getting good schooling. I was very fortunate. They saw to it that I got a fairly good education, and I'm pleased about that, and I was lucky enough to get fellowships here and there. I had a fellowship at the University of Tennessee where I studied and got a masters degree. And then I got a further fellowship serving, interestingly enough, on the staff of the Dean of Students at the University of Maryland, and finished up there. And taught there, as well as working in public schools for many many many years. And I have really had a very very good life and a very good career. Part of it is an interesting story, in that when I was a young teacher, I started as a junior high school teacher. And in those days, I taught real math to junior high school students.

END OF TAPE 2/SIDE 2

TAPE 3/SIDE 1

HALL: Well, I was just saying to Nancy that you're self-conscious when you're speaking about yourself. But I do think one interesting phase of my life, at least which I found fascinating. When I was a young teacher, and I mentioned that I started out in junior high school, I was chosen in the early fifties, to be an exchange teacher. Now in those days, that was a prize plum, let me tell you. They had exchange teacher programs between here and Great Britain. Between here and Australia. There was a small exchange program between here and Canada, where a teacher in that country who had your similar credentials would come and teach at your school, and you would go teach at that school. Fortunately, I was chosen and I went in 1951. It was audacity if you ever heard of it. I was just one year of teaching under my belt. But I applied like I was king of the hill, and got it.

And I was chosen to go to a school in the west of England, close to the Welsh border, in their county called Herefordshire. The county seat is a country town called Hereford. Now they have Hertfordshire. And then they have Herefordshire. And these are two different counties, like Texas is not the state of Maine. You know, they're far apart. But Herefordshire, and Hertfordshire, two different places. And I was at a place called Leominster [spells it]—Leominster, in Herefordshire at a small small private school called Lucton [spells it]. And I taught, it was a boy's school at that time, it's now co-ed fortunately. I taught students who would be what we think of about ninth grade up to about eleventh or twelfth grade. They call them forms. Third form, fourth form, and so on. And I taught real geography and they were fascinated to know about North American geography, particularly United States geography, because you see, we had just helped them win the Second World War. And they were ever so grateful.

And I was the Yank master, the American master, who came to our school, you know and is going to teach about school. Oh my! I had to learn to understand them because accents vary all over England, as they do here. But it was wonderful, wonderful, enlightening, enriching experience for which I would not take anything.

They have a school calendar quite unlike ours. We hit it in September and go like mad for nine months with just a little bit of break at Christmas and what have you. They are sensible in that they go to school for three months and they're out for about six weeks. One of those breaks being at Christmas, one being at Easter time and one being in the summer. Then they have another session of three months, and then six weeks and so on. That makes the school year. Well, during those breaks, I was able to go spend five or six weeks in London and close around, Brighton, Oxford, just everywhere that I could go. Then at the spring break, I spent Easter of that year, that would have been '52, in Rome. And toured the whole of Italy which was a wonderful, wonderful experience. You may have France, you may have Germany, you may have Austria, you may even have Britain, and I am a real Anglophile. But give me [raps table] Italy and die. I

mean, that is the place. Have you been to Italy? You know what I'm speaking about. A beautiful country, *molta bella, Senora. Molta, molta, bella!* Anyway, the summer months, I had ended up my teaching stint there and getting ready to come home. And so I chose then to do some more touring there in the British Isles, and I did go to Scotland. I went to the summer games in Aberdeen. Fascinating situation that they have there, all kinds of games that they have with their kilts and all. Did some other touring. Took the Grand Flyer back from Scotland. The Scottish Flyer to London, just in time to catch my ship to come back to this country. I had gone over to England, get this, on the QE I. The "Q-E-I." The QE II is now about to be retired.

MARTIN: How many days did it take?

HALL: How many days did it take? Five or six days. I think, six days, five nights, maybe. But the QE I was a marvelous, marvelous big ship. It's the one that was finally sold for scrap and they hauled it over to Hong Kong and it sank through an unfortunate fire there in Hong Kong Harbor. Now the Queen Mary, which was its sister ship. They were on the Atlantic for many, many, many years. QE I, was just called the Queen Elizabeth at that time, because there was no QE II. But the Mary is still going, it's out in Long Beach, California as a tourist attraction and hotel. When I went to England, George VI and Queen Elizabeth were on the throne. The year that I was there, George died. Elizabeth became the Queen Mother and the present queen became the queen. That was the year that I was there. She ascended to the throne.

MARTIN: In '51?

HALL: Mm-hmm. That was '52. I went in '51, came back in '52. Now, I went over on the QE I, as it later became known, and I came back on the ship that is such a sad, sad story for the United States. The biggest ship that this country ever built as a passenger ship was called the S.S. United States. It is rotting away in Norfolk, just rotting away. It was a beautiful ship, an absolutely. And it, to this day, holds the Atlantic "Blue Ribbon." The prize for the speed of making an Atlantic crossing. It, to this day, holds that because, following that, airplanes took over and they did not see the need of speed. Liners became vacation things, if you've ever been cruising. And I since then have been on the Norway, the cruise ship Norway, that was at one time the France from the World War II era. It was converted into what is now the flagship of the Norwegian line. Had earlier been a French liner that went out of service because it wasn't needed. They didn't need it. They put the Mary up on dry dock. They put the Elizabeth up on dry dock. Planes took over and these ships just sat around in all their glory and these were gorgeous big ships. I mean you can't believe how big they were. What ships have you been on?

MARTIN: I have not.

HALL: You have not cruised anywhere in the Caribbean? Oh honey, you can't believe the floating city, a floating city. Elegant, elegant, elegant. But anyway, that was a highlight of my little life. No scandals, my dear. I was not scandalous.

MARTIN: I know, you got excited when I mentioned scandals and you have one, I know you did but you don't want to put it on tape!

HALL: [Laughs} No no no.

MARTIN: Are you about to tell us a scandal?

SMITTY: Did you tell about your mother flying into Biltmore with Cornelia, and did you tell about your relatives, Ringo Starr, who is actually Starsky?

HALL: Oh no, no. That's way...

MARTIN: Go ahead.

HALL: That's way back in the history. Now you mentioned that you wanted.

MARTIN: We'd love to have photos. I want to take a photo of you.

HALL: Oh me with my black eye whenever I fell down. OK.

MARTIN: That's because your glasses hit, is that right?

HALL: Yes. I hit with my glasses. A matter of fact, I fell on this side. I have, and I did not show you when you were here before, but I will do quickly. Other photographs, in addition to these that I showed you. Now these are actual photographs. These, another descendant of the original builder of this house, made copies. And Nancy, just slip over here. You're welcome to take any of these.

MARTIN: We'll copy them and bring them back. Of course. This is right here!

[Remaining discussion is about photographs being viewed; some are reproduced here.]

HALL: In front of my house, right. You see, that's the railing that's there. This has been bricked, this was concrete. You see, the horse and buggy back there? There was a little chain link fence, this lovely wrought iron posts were there. And this tells who all this was. The family of. This is the man who had the house built, his wife and their four children had this house built for this family. It was one big house at that time.

MARTIN: Can you judge the year?

HALL: We know the year. 1914.



Tucker family, outside 802 Massachusetts Avenue NE, 1914. Front row, from left: father George Prescott Tucker (b. 1864), mother Elizabeth Ellen Stearns (b. 1860), Max Winfield (b. 1893). Top row, from left: Marian (age 17), Prescott (b. 1890, age 24), Edna (b. 1899, age 15).

MARTIN: Good. All right.

HALL: Any of the rest of these that you feel would be helpful.

MARTIN: This is the family? That would be excellent.

HALL: That's part of the family.

MARTIN: That's your front room.

HALL: Let me see. No, this would be—they called it the library. This would be the den. This shows you a street scene of Mass. Avenue.

MARTIN: Oh yeah.

HALL: There's one of the boys. He served in the First World War.

MARTIN: This, I believe...

HALL: ...is across the street.

MARTIN: ...is the hospital here, and that is the building that's at Seventh. Isn't it, Seventh and Massachusetts? Which had been a...

HALL: No, this is across the street. It's the south side of Mass. Avenue. Mass. Avenue, 1920.

MARTIN: OK. Yeah, that's good.

HALL: Now this, is this corner right here where my TV is. In that room. They called it the library. Look at the kind of lamps they had at that time. And this would be the living room. And you see the curtains that they pulled between the rooms?

MARTIN: For heat, probably.

HALL: Christmas, 1920. This is interesting. This is my den, looking into what is now my bedroom, which then was a dining room. The fixture in the dining room. This is this fireplace, in the den there. One of the girls standing there. Well, you may copy...



Edna Tucker, in front of library fireplace, Christmas, 1920.

MARTIN: Right. Yes, let me take these...

HALL: I'd take the street scene, and the one with the horse and buggy.

MARTIN: Right. And this, this is the side of your house, with the awnings. 1918.

HALL: That's from out in this little park.

MARTIN: And the canna lilies. Mr. Tucker was a major. Look at this. Let me show these to Bernadette and she will make copies and we will bring them back to you.

HALL: All right.



Edna Tucker, with her fiancé Jim Homaday, in 1920, inside 802 Massachusetts Avenue NE. They were married on Sept. 11, 1923.

MARTIN: We'll bring back the originals. But all of these relate specifically to this house which is pretty important.

HALL: Well, this is now one of the grand old dames of the Hill. This house has been on the tour. Now this gets rid of some. Now these are pictures of a cousin. Those were given me by one of the cousin's granddaughters. These two women are granddaughters of this man. The one granddaughter gave me those, the other granddaughter copied from her collection and kept her pictures. Here's the same picture that this granddaughter had. Here is this house before it was ever painted in 1922. Same picture. Same '22, and there's nice snow on the ground too. Family portraits. This is the side of my house from Eighth Street. Here is the living room. Here are the three windows right behind you. In there. Here, here's my

back porch. And the balcony up there. Here's the fencing that was around the houses at that time. How they ever tore all that stuff out and put in chain link I will never never know. So many, many places on the Hill that happened to.

Just sing out any time you want to take some of these. They took a lot of family pictures. Now this is at the corner of my house. There's my little front porch, where you came in the door. This is the front corner of that living room. Now this is interesting, in that that's the staircase that goes up here. This wall, John Jones and I put in here. At one time, this was the reception hall. You came right in the reception hall. This evidently was Christmas. And they gathered on the steps out there in the hallway. It's marked Christmas. Now that's this park, next door. That's the street scene looking toward the seven hundred block of Mass. Avenue. This is Mass. Avenue, here little kiddies out in the snow.

MARTIN: Right. You can see how big it is by the size of the kids. That's before the pond, of course, was put in.

HALL: Right, right. I was here when that was done. And the clothing will give you a good example. So any of these that you want.

MARTIN: Right, let me take that with, and I will bring it over to Mrs. McMahon today and ask her to choose, make copies, and I'll bring them back.

HALL: Now, this is pretty interesting. That's the corner, that's one of the sons, of my living room, right in there. You can see the bay window. You can see my radiator is still there. And that's marked "parlor" and that's Max, one of the boys. There was Prescott and Max. And the daughters were Janet and, what was the other one? Now here's, it wouldn't mean that much to you but, this is what is now my bedroom. These sidelights are still there. I took out the French doors. These were French doors in the middle and I took them out but this is looking toward Eighth.

MARTIN: Is this on the main floor?

HALL: Yes. That's this back room. I'll show it to you before you go. And this is the family. George P. Tucker was a very distinguished man. He was the head legal counsel at the Patent Office. He was the M.I.T. graduate who later became a lawyer and he was the father of this clan. And, I think that must be Mrs. Tucker. But anyway, that's the paneling in this back room and I'll show you that room. Another picture in the front of the house. That's the side yard. The three windows are right back of you there. Those three windows, before the house was painted.

MARTIN: Do you know when the house was painted?

HALL: Oh dear, Inez did that. She said, “Joseph, I can’t stand the look of this house. It’s just too dark and gloomy. I can’t stand it, I’ve got to paint this house.” I could shoot her. I could shoot her.

MARTIN: Yeah, now it’s got to be painted.

HALL: This is interesting because here again, this is what is now my bedroom, what was then the dining room.

MARTIN: These are the leaded glass?

HALL: Right. They had a china cabinet or something there on that one wall and they were gathered around the table. And the granddaughters say that Mrs. Tucker ruled the roost. You can look at her and tell she’s a very stalwart, forceful woman, I gather. Well, we’re about to the end. This is one of the daughters and, well they’re all family portraits but they show somewhat of the house. This shows a good deal of the front. This is exactly as the front looks now, except it’s been painted. This is where you came in the front door. That’s the front door you came in. I have no idea who these birds are. I don’t think that’s George P. Tucker. That might be the two sons. And this, Lillian Tucker, this granddaughter, did not label things as well as the other one did for me. But.

MARTIN: I will take good care of it.

HALL: Well, please do because this all means a great deal to me as you know.

MARTIN: Absolutely. Where, what part of the house would you like to have yourself memorialized in, with my little photograph?

HALL: Do I have to?

MARTIN: Yes, it’s required. [Laughs]

HALL: Well, let’s, I guess that fireplace in the den. Then I’ll show you that bedroom.

MARTIN: We’re about to take a picture of Dr. Hall and I just want to say how much I enjoyed this interview and we will, of course, give you a copy of the transcript.

HALL: Do you have to? [Laughs] Yes, thank you, I would appreciate it.

MARTIN: And you can even listen to the tapes, certainly. But many people will thank you. This is recorded forever.

HALL: I pity the poor person that has to transcribe it.

MARTIN: They love it. They absolutely love it. Otherwise they won't do it. This will be one of their favorites. And thank you very much, Dr. Hall.

HALL: Well, thank you for coming, Nancy. I appreciate what you're doing. You're doing a real good job on this interview.

MARTIN: It is a wonderful project, right.

HALL: Yes.

MARTIN: All right. Thank you.

HALL: Thank you.

END OF TAPE 3/SIDE 1

END OF INTERVIEW