

Interview with Gordon Hervela

February 26, 1989

Int (I): This is an oral interview with Gordon Hervela in his home in Howell, Michigan October 26, 1989. He was born on February 28, 1917 in Calumet, Michigan

Gordon Hervela (GH): My dad's name was Gus, Gustav Hervela and my mother was Charlotte Neigardt was her maiden name.

I: Neigardt. Were they both originally from Calumet?

GH: Well they were from the copper country, yes.

I: Okay. Their parents, where were they originally from?

GH: Well my father's parents were from Finland and my mother's parents were from Norway and Sweden.

I: Were they? Okay. So the, they came over when they were very young or?

GH: Oh yeah, they were both, both couples were very young when they come over and settled in the copper country, worked in the copper mines. And grandpa Neigardt, he stayed up there and cleared several sections of land that he had boughten from Calumet and Hecla and had a big farm. And then of course grandpa Hervela, he worked up there for quite a while and he moved to Detroit and he went to work at Ford's.

I: Oh, so he wasn't a miner all of his life, Grandpa Hervela?

GH: No, no.

I: He was a, the grandmothers, were they both farm and...

GH: Well grandma Hervela, she was always in town because the Herveles always lived in town, but grandma Neigardt, why she stayed right on the farm all the time.

I: Big farm? The Hervela side, your father's, was it a small family or a very large?

GH: No there was thirteen kids all together.

I: Thirteen? Amen, geeze. That must have been.

GH: And then on my mother's side, the Neigardt side, my grandpa had this big farm up there and he always figured that with all the acreage that he kept acquiring that eventually he'd have boys that'd help him work it. But as luck would have it, grandpa Neigardt wound up with nine girls and one boy, so he didn't get much help on the farm.

I: He didn't get...so it means he must have had some pretty tough daughters then?

GH: Well most of them were used for picking potato bugs and raking hay, and then doing chores around the house, and helping grandma.

I: So was the boy the oldest or a middle or was he?

GH: Uncle Art, he was, yeah he was the oldest.

I: He was the oldest?

GH: Yeah, yeah.

I: Okay. So you've said that the Hervalas moved down to Detroit?

GH: Yeah.

I: Was he a miner like for a very long time or did he?

GH: Why that I couldn't tell you.

I: Couldn't tell you, but he decided to move to Detroit?

GH: Yeah, yeah because they heard about Ford Motor Car Company hiring, starting to pay five dollars a day, and that was big money. So they all went to Detroit.

I: Do you remember, do you have a date of when he might have went down?

GH: No, no.

I: No idea.

GH: See because they had a big strike up there in the copper mines and then after, but before the strike was over with a lot of the mines started shutting down, because they couldn't afford to pay the wages that they, that they were demanding. There wasn't that much profit in copper. And then of course that'd cause the people to look elsewhere for employment you know, and move away.

I: And then Detroit was a big place to go.

GH: Yeah, Detroit and Chicago, Milwaukee, they went all over.

I: Did they?

GH: Yeah.

I: And the Neigardts weren't miners, they were just basically?

GH: Oh he was a miner.

I: was he a miner?

GH: Grandpa was a miner, worked in the mines and then he worked the farm too.

I: Did he? He worked both? Okay, your father and mother, were they farmers, miners? What about your dad?

GH: My dad, as far as I know he was, he was a salesman, he sold, he worked for a guy at Pacific Tea Company.

I: Was this in?

GH: Coffee and tea, that was in Calumet

I: In Calumet.

GH: That's as far as I know about his employment.

I: So you were born in Calumet we said. Did you spend all your time in Calumet, was that where you spent most your life or?

GH: No, no, it was all away from Calumet.

I: Oh, okay.

GH: Calumet is just a spot on the map that, that's where I was born.

I: It was where you were born. So where did you end up after Calumet, your first?

GH: Detroit.

I: Detroit.

GH: Yeah, that's really my home, Detroit.

I: Okay, what was the age when you first moved to Detroit with your parents?

GH: I'd say I was about three.

I: Three.

GH: Yeah.

I: Okay. Now when you went down at three, was with your mother and father?

GH: Yeah.

I: Okay. And was your father still working for the?

GH: No, I don't know what he was doing then.

I: Oh? He just went down?

GH: Yeah, he was, he might have worked in a factory, or I don't know what he did. I never did know.

I: Okay. I know that your father left, now what age was that?

GH: When I was still about three he took off.

I: Three, he left.

GH: Yeah, yeah.

I: Did you stay in Detroit then with your mother?

GH: Oh yeah, yeah.

I: Now you had a sister too, right?

GH: Yeah, Dorothy.

I: Dorothy, and she was younger than you?

GH: No she's older than me. Fifteen months older.

I: Okay, and so you and her, did you, I know there was a time when you did go back to Calumet?

GH: Oh yeah, that was when I was about, probably eight, seven or eight.

I: Can you tell me why you had, why you went back to Calumet?

GH: Well we went back in the summertime to help them with the hay making, and then my mother took sick. So they shipped her back to Detroit and left me there with my grandpa Neigardt and Grandma Neigardt.

I: Okay, so with the Neigardts. But the Havelas were still down in Detroit and the Neigardts were still farming up here?

GH: Yeah, yeah, right, yeah, right.

I: Now was this, you said you went for the summers. Was this something you did a lot or?

GH: Well that was a thing of the times, that when it was haymaking time why, all the kids tried to get back home with their families, to help the grandparents out.

I: I see. So at eight o'clock, at eight years old, excuse me, you stayed in Calumet. How long did you stay in Calumet with the Neigardt clan?

GH: Oh it must have been a couple of years I stayed up there with grandma and grandpa Neigardt.

I: And that was on the farm?

GH: Yeah.

I: Was that, was life on the farm at that time pretty rough for a young boy or?

GH: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah it was because grandma, she was really persnickety about her cow barn. And she wouldn't let the hired men in there or my grandpa. And she had to milk the cows herself.

I: Just her?

GH: And the only exception to the rule was that she taught me how to milk, so I used to help her milk cows.

I: yeah?

GH: And carry the milk in and run the butter churn and run the separator and then the butter churn. Do all those chores that a normal farm boy would do.

I: Yeah, so at eight years old you had some pretty big responsibilities then?

GH: Oh yeah, yeah.

I: I know Calumet can be a cold area. What was it like for you in the winter time?

GH: Oh yeah. Well I had to ski to school or else snowshoe.

I: Didja?

GH: Yeah, I went to Dover School, that was about, probably about a mile and a half from grandpa Neigardt's farm.

I: So you had to, every morning you did that, either ski or snowshoe a mile and a half to school? Just you or you had, was your sister there at the time?

GH: No, no

I: She was still in Detroit?

GH: Just myself.

I: Just yourself. Okay. I'm trying to think of some things. Anything else about the farm at that time that was used? Do you have any memories?

GH: Grandpa taught me how to ski and we had a big red barn and off that barn was a hill. When school started grandpa said, "Well you better learn how to ski. Cause that's how you're going to have to go to school." So he made a track for me and then I took my grandmother's Norwegian skis and I used those all the time. And that's how I learned to ski. Down the hill [on] that track that grandpa made.

I: Yeah. I imagine, I know that the Norwegians and Swedish are known for their skiing. I imagine your grandparents were quite the skiers, the timers, the way they get around. I remember you telling me, this is kind of a side-track, but when you were a young boy, you told me a story about you got bit by the nose on a goose, by a goose. Was that at the farms?

GH: That was probably out at Armada

I: Oh that was?

GH: Yeah, not up there

I: Okay, that was a side track we can erase. So you were there till eight?

GH: And then grandpa used to hand his scythe for the orchard up in a plum tree. And they used that for cutting hay and cutting wheat and everything you know. And of course the thing, when hanging up there in the weather, why it got a little rusty. So in the spring I went up the plum, up in the tree to pick some plums and unfortunately the back of the right hand hit the scythe and cut it wide opening. And I got blood-poisoning in it, so then grandma and grandpa Neigardt had to hustle me to the train station in Calumet, put me on a train and sent me to Detroit.

I: Because of the?

GH: Blood-poisoning. So then my mother and sister met me in Detroit at the railroad station and put me in the Ford Hospital. So I was there for several days until the infection cleared up.

I: What age was this at?

GH: This was, I was about probably about eight, eight and a half, nine somewhere around there.

I: Were you sad to leave the farm up in Calumet? Were you?

GH: Oh yeah, I liked it up there.

I: You liked it up there? You missed that, a little bit?

GH: Yeah.

I: So, once you got back to Detroit after the blood poisoning cleared up, did you stay up there then?

GH: No, then we stayed in Detroit and then, then let's see. Yeah we moved out to Seven Mile Road and Woodard, and I went to school there.

I: This was in Detroit?

GH: Yeah in Detroit. Yeah then I did spend time out in Armada with the Darga family.

I: The Darga family? Who, I don't know who?

GH: Well they were some people that had applied to the courts for children to help on the farms.

I: Oh I see.

GH: And through the court I managed to live with them for two or three years.

I: Oh and you worked on the farm for them as a hand and then they paid you back?

GH: I worked for my room and board and then the state paid them like eighteen dollars a month for my support or my care.

I: Oh I see. So you were doing something like that.

GH: Yeah.

I: And, okay. And then on weekends go see your mother or did you stay there?

GH: Oh no, she used to come out and see me once in a while and then, then Dorothy'd come out, my sister, and she spent a year, about a year, just about a year out there.

I: Oh in the same farm?

GH: Yeah

I: She worked too and?

GH: yeah, yeah. And then we went to school out there.

I: Okay, so this was...

GH: And after moved back to Detroit again, and then to school, public schools in Detroit, and then we moved out to I think Livernois and had an opportunity to get in the Henry Ford Trade School through a friend of my sister's. His name was Harold Eriksson. And instead of going to high school I went to the Henry Ford Trade School.

I: So this was about fourteen, fifteen years old?

GH: Yeah when I was fifteen when I started there.

I: So between getting back from Calumet with the blood poisoning and the trade school, you were living on a farm in Detroit area?

GH: Yeah, in around Detroit and Armada, and then you know. Not too interesting, just kind of a boring life.

I: [laughs] So the trade school, how long was that for?

GH: That was for four years.

I: For four years, and that was instead of going to high school?

GH: Yeah. See, and then when we graduated from there well we had credits we through the eleven-eight, because we didn't have history and English, that what we were short, so if we wanted to get something equivalent to a high school education, why we got to take those courses on our own.

I: Oh I see.

GH: And I graduated from there in 1936.

I: So through the trade school, are they, just taught you a trade towards the auto industry or?

GH: No, we, they taught us to be machinists. Cause we'd go to school one week and we'd work in the shop for two.

I: Oh I see, did a lot of young men at that time do this?

GH: Oh yeah. Mostly the sons of widowed ladies, either from, that had lost their husbands while they were working at Ford's or other people that were fatherless.

I: I see. So I as you say...

GH: I guess Henry Ford was quite a humanitarian. He used to take an interest in the youth and try to get us out on the right track.

I: Do you think it helped out or?

GH: Oh sure, sure. They were very strict and they paid us wages and we had to take and show our savings account, our bankbook, we had to take it to the school once a month and show them that we were saving money. So they were doing everything that would help to build character into a person.

I: I see. But this was for, mainly for young men that didn't have, that were fatherless then?

GH: Yeah, right. And then there are some exceptions to the rules. There were some kids that, whose dads were working there, and they were an influencing factor in them getting in.

I: So at this time you're living at like a dormitory setting or were you?

GH: Oh no, no, I lived at home, yeah. I used to ride the [trolley] and the busses on Livernois to the Rouge Plant like all the Ford workers

I: Oh yeah? You were with everybody then?

GH: We were just one of the crowd. Had to be there at seven in the morning, you know, till three-thirty in the afternoon.

I: Yeah? So what was, were you, had to be almost downtown Detroit?

GH: No, no out in Rouge

I: Rouge, okay. Sorry.

GH: Yeah. Out where the big Ford plant was in River Rouge.

I: What was, it pretty prosperous at that time in that area? Were things going pretty well for the family?

GH: Oh yeah, things were going pretty good.

I: Pretty comfortable? Okay.

GH: And then my mother started the, went to school for the course to become a beauty operator. And of course when she got her own, got started and gotten her own business, why, things were a little more plentiful then because there was a little more money coming in.

I: So most, a lot of what you made from working for the farm or anything, and then working at the Ford plant...

GH: My own support, you know, buy my own clothes and things that I needed and things that I wanted.

I: Okay. So your mother went to a beauty school? Did she have her own shop after a while or did she work for?

GH: Oh yeah, she, when she started out worked for different people and decided to open her own shop, by, she was on the corner of Franklin-Livernois for forty years.

I: OH was she?

GH: Yeah, in that beauty shop there, you know.

I: And you were about, you were going to Ford Trade School at that time?

GH: Yep.

I: Well what kind of, what did you live in a little apartment with your mother and your sister or just a little?

GH: Yeah, we had one bedroom apartment.

I: One bedroom? Did you sleep on the couch or something?

GH: I had a fold-out, we had a murphy bed in the living room.

I: Didja? Okay. I don't know if you'd mind if I ask some questions about your father. There was nothing, he just, from Detroit he just left?

GH: That's right. As far as I know he, we never did hear from him or never could find him. Never even get any of the, anybody to tell us anything about him.

I: Okay. So graduation from Ford Trade School, what was the next step for you?

GH: Well then I went to work in the different factories around Detroit, like L.A. Spring and Wire Company and Flow Spring and Wire, and then I finally landed at Excello.

I: Excello. Okay. Those early days in Detroit, was it rough, for a young man? Was it rough, was it fun?

GH: Oh it was fun, oh yeah it was a fun time.

I: Fun and getting in trouble sometimes?

GH: No, it was, we, I was always too busy to get in trouble. But we, both Dorothy and I grew up in nice neighborhoods so there was not too much chance to get into too serious problems.

I: So during Ford Trade School and after, your connection with Calumet, were they?

GH: Just visits.

I: Just visits?

GH: Yeah, periodic visits.

I: And the only ones left up there were the Neigardt family?

GH: Right, that was, actually, and Uncle Art.

I: And they were the sons, son and daughter of your grandparents?

GH: Yeah, the Neigardts.

I: How long was Aunt Julie and Uncle Art up there?

GH: Well Aunt Julie, she was down in Detroit for a good many years, and then she lived in Toronto, Canada, she married a Canadian. Then he finally died and then she lived alone in Detroit, worked at Ford's, and then when she retired, Uncle Art had the house up there in Calumet, so she went up to live with him, because his wife had died, so it was just the two of them.

I: When, I remember visiting that house you're talking about. Now was that a, at that time was that a house for miners to live in?

GH: Yeah, it was originally built for, it was built by the mining companies and then later on my Uncle Art bought it. And he did a lot of work on it and remodeled it, one thing or another because he was a cabinet maker, he was a carpenter. But when Grandpa Neigardt died, why all the girls got together, and they decided Uncle Art should have that farm, that my grandpa had. And Uncle Art had spent so much time there as a young man, and got so sick of it that he didn't want any part of the farm, so the farm was sold.

I: Oh, was it?

GH: Yeah.

I: So it was sold after, now when grandma Neigardt, did she die after?

FGH: She died first.

I: Oh, she died first? And all the sisters? I know you won't be able to tell me where they all went, but did most of them go down to Detroit too to start working or did they stay up in Calumet or?

GH: They spread all over after, Sigred, no, let's see, that was on grandpa's side. Oh. Let's see, Aunt Julie, she wound up in Canada, Dianna, she wound up in, back in Detroit. Most of them wound up in Detroit.

I: In Detroit?

GH: Yeah, Jenny, yeah.

I: It's like at the time that was the place to go if you...

GH: Yeah, yeah, their and their husbands.

I: I'm sorry, I'd forgot to ask earlier, your Hervela side, how many children were on that side on your grandparents, on the Hervela side, how many children did they have?

GH: They had thirteen.

I: Thirteen.

GH: Yeah.

I: Okay. Did they all go with the Hervelas from Calumet down to Detroit and end up in Detroit? Were there any Hervelas end up in Detroit?

GH: Oh yeah, yeah there was two girls left up there.

I: Oh were they? Because of marriage or.

GH: Yeah, they married. Sigred and Elgie, yeah their homes were up there in Calumet.

I: Okay, alright. When you made your visits to Calumet at that time, it was all by train?

GH: No, it was mostly by car. And then there'd be a ferry to take you across the Straights.

I: How long was that ferry, that must have not taken very long?

GH: Oh, I would say probably forty-five minutes to an hour to get across there.

I: So you drove car through most of the Lower Peninsula, and did you drive the Upper Peninsula too?

GH: yeah, uh-huh.

I: That must have been a long...

GH: Yeah that was a long, drawn out affair.

I: I imagine, so you probably didn't make the trips very often?

GH: No.

I: No? They were just some things.

GH: And then of course when I had the blood poisoning, my aunt, when I come back on the train, they put the train on the ferry and that's how they got that across.

I: So, it had to have been dirt and gravel roads all the way?

GH: Oh yeah, yeah.

I: Your average speed must have been what? Twenty miles an hour?

GH: They used to get about forty, forty-five miles an hour.

I: Forty? Yeah. But hard rain or something, you must have just been in trouble. What about the winter times? I know...

GH: We never went up there much in the winter.

I: How about when you were a kid, going back to Calumet in the winter times, getting around?

GH: Well that was, horse drawn sleighs, yeah.

I: Uh-huh, or with skis like you said before.

GH: Yeah or skis, but most of the time when grandpa and I went to town, why it was always hook the team up to a cutter, took the sled into town.

I: Most of the houses at that time, I've been up there visiting and Aunt Julie's old house, I've noticed they're built up pretty high. Was that the thing to?

GH: Well yeah, that was to get them up out of the snow. Yeah because like Uncle Art and Aunt Julie, why from the front porch out to the road they had a ramp built, and that was four feet high, so the first three or four feet of snow Uncle Art or Aunt Julie didn't have to shovel it, after that...

I: They had to start digging!

GH: Yeah.

I: Back to Detroit, you, so you, you worked through the auto plants. You had to have been about twenty years old when you started your first few jobs and?

GH: Well I was, like nineteen when I got my first job away from Ford, you know.

I: That was doing?

GH: That was with L. A. Young Spring and Wiring

I: What were you doing there?

GH: I was running a circuit grinder and taking care of a tool crib.

I: I see. Now your wife, Anne, when did you meet her?

GH: Well let's see, I think that was '37, '38, around in there.

I: You'd have to have been, about mid-twenties?

GH: Yeah, not quite twenty yet.

I: Not quite twenty?

GH: No, because when I told my mother we was getting married I was only nineteen, she had a fit!

I: Did she? She didn't like the idea of her son getting married? What, did she tell you you were too young?

GH: Oh yeah, yeah.

I: Get a good job or whatever.

GH: Yeah, dry behind the ears yet, you know?

I: Where did you meet her? Was it a thing in?

GH: We went to a dance one night out on Fourteen Mile Road and the Northwestern Highway. There was a Veteran of Foreign War had a club out there and they had a dance floor built so we went out there and that's where I met Annie.

I: So, okay, you met her in around nineteen. You were married? Were you working, still with the same company?

GH: I was working with Excello when we got married.

I: And what were you doing for Excello?

GH: Well I was in the inspection department then.

I: Inspecting parts or?

GH: Yeah, and then up over the years, why, after forty-five years I wound up working through production and inspection and estimating, did some traveling for the company and.

I: Didja?

GH: Yeah.

I: And all, this was all still in the Detroit area?

GH: Yeah. And then when we moved the plant here to Holland way, then I retired out of this activity here.

I: At the early stages of being married, was Annie, did she have a job too or was she?

GH: Well she worked at Sarah Fisher Home in an orphanage. And then of course, being that she was born and raised around Farmington area, and then we found a lot on the Nine Mile Road. Uncle Wally and Aunt Mary, they got the lot next door to us, so that's when we started to build our houses.

I: So you started to build a house, now Aunt Mary is your wife's sister?

GH: Yeah, right.

I: And so you started building houses together, at the same time?

GH: Yeah. Well, no we built my house first and then after that one we started on Uncle Wally's.

I: So at that time I imagine that area, I know I go back down and drive around there and there's everything, everywhere you know, concrete. At that time was it pretty well undeveloped?

GH: It was just farm country, it was all farm country.

I: Farm country. And maybe you were thinking that, "Hey this is going to be a great spot to be out in the country."

GH: Yeah, yeah.

I: Then, now it's booming.

GH: Yeah, it's grown up around here, so. And when we decided to come to Holland, well then we sold the house down there and then we bought up here where we're at now.

I: Going back to a few, just kind of skipping around now. You said you were born in 1917 so, when you were young up in Calumet or even in Detroit you were in the period of the Great Depression. And everyone has always wondered what was it like? But for you, was there an effect on your life?

GH: No, not really, nothing noticeable because we managed to, to live you know. To eat, one thing or another but as far as having any kind of luxuries or whatever was out of the picture.

I: But you didn't have the devastation of some other families where, you know, out of the home, out of jobs, no things like that?

GH: No, no nothing like that.

I: Because being on the farm you had a chance to, even the Hervelas when they were down in Detroit?

GH: Well grandpa had a rough time there, during the Depression.

I: His employment was down in Detroit?

GH: Yeah, he worked at Ford's.

I: Okay, Ford's, I'm sorry.

GH: And I know he had a real rough go there, and he had to take any kind of work he could find which wasn't much in those days, you know.

I: So he was_____

GH: And then of course as their children graduated from high school and they all got jobs, why then they'd all would kick in so much on every payday and help to support the family. To keep the house going, that's they only way they could make it, you know, that many children. And then of course for a couple of years there, why, Dorothy and I lived with them too, you know, don't belong with the rest of their own kids.

I: Lived with the Herveles?

GH: Uh-huh, yeah.

I: That was a big family, what was that like being in? I know both were big families, what was it like being a kid, being a grandchild in those big houses at that time?

GH: There was a lot of activity and a lot of things going on, I'll tell you. And the, well I do remember when grandma used to put Lakie and I up with undershirts at night, and they were my grandpa's old shirts. They were our nightgowns.

I: Yeah? I know even now, with even one or two children, to give them, well let's say to go to church is just crazy. Did they try to get you...

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I: I know now a days, even having two kids, trying to get them ready to go to church would just be hectic. Did they get you ready and take you to church?

GH: Oh no, we had to get ourselves ready. Everybody had the ship to themselves. There was no lolly-gagging or putzing around. When they said it was time to go, we had to get dressed to go. And Grandpa Hervela, why he was quite a stickler for making sure that we went to Sunday school, went to Confirmation school, and because he had been president of the church several years, so he was really active in it. He wanted the kids to do right.

I: Well were both the Neigardt family and the Hervela family, were they religious in that sense?

GH: Well Grandma Neigardt and Grandpa Neigardt were not too religious, but Grandma Hervela and Grandpa Hervela were very, very religious.

I: Were they?

GH: Very close to the church all the time.

I: Were they? Okay.

GH: _____

I: Being in those big families, trying to just run them would just be crazy. What about discipline, if you got caught doing something mischievous, what were?

GH: You paid the penalty.

I: And what?

GH: You were told once and that's the only you was told. This is the way it is, and this is the way it's going to be, and if you want, if don't want to stay within that boundary, why you suffer the consequences. And I'm telling you, you did suffer.

[Both laugh]

I: What were the consequences at times?

GH: Well like, one time my Aunt Irene, like, she had a brand new pair of tennis shoes. So I helped myself to the tennis shoes, and me and my buddies had built what we called a bunk out in the back. And that was a hole in the ground with a roof on it, and unfortunately we had a lot of rain and it filled up with water. So we found a little gas tank from a Ford, so I decided to go floating on that gas tank and I fell off it, and Irene's brand new tennis shoes become a whole ball up of clay and mud. So grandpa took me in the basement and really tanned my hide. I never touched anybody else's stuff after that, believe me.

I: Yeah. I imagine. So there are some other things in history that have happened, and you were involved in. I know being, working in a trade area, and I know when World War II started was a big time for many people to stay in America and industry.

GH: And industry. Oh yeah, yeah.

I: What was your part in World War II?

GH: Well I was always, the job that I had, had got me deferments from the service. So every time my draft notice would come up, why the company would cover me with a deferment that I was needed, that I was necessary. And then when of course the World War ended and they had that Army of Occupation, by then I was drafted and went down to the draft board. And as luck would have it, at that time they passed a law or they passed a bill in Washington that if you were twenty-six and you had dependents, which I had your dad, I'd be excluded from that, that military service of the Army of Occupation, so that's the way it was.

I: So you just missed'er?

GH: Yeah, I just missed it.

I: Did, I know some companies and some manufacturing outfits changed what they were producing to help produce war weapons.

GH: Oh yeah, yeah.

I: Did your company do the same?

GH: Yeah, everything we did was flung on the aircraft.

I: Was it?

GH: Yeah it was all aircraft. See, before that we used to build pure-pack machines and angle bore machines and different type of machinery, but it was required that we got into the aircraft business. And we had a lot of jobs with a lot of the companies, Pratt and Whitney, Wright Aircraft, Grumman. We did work for all of them, made parts for all of them. Westinghouse, General Electric. Yeah, and another

company was Allison, they were owned by General Motors, we made a lot of parts for them. And then we made parts for the, towards the end of the war, why we made parts for Packard Rolls-Royce engine. And that was the engine that was developed in England, Rolls-Royce.

I: During the war, were you always, I mean not always, but I'm saying would you watch your paper hoping to see that war is over and...

GH: Oh yes, yeah. That was really horrible when they, you know, bombed Pearl Harbor, and then to see the things that was going on over in Europe that Hitler was doing. Yeah, we were sure glad when it was over with.

I: Sometimes, some people have been saying that at that time they were covering up in America, not letting the American public know what Hitler was doing in the concentration camps and those such things. Did you...

GH: I don't see that there was any cover up, it's just that the information coming out of Germany, and out of these foreign countries, it was limited. And the only ones that brought back anything at all was any of the servicemen that might, might have come home on furloughs and stuff like. Or you know, some reason the military was bringing him back, but they were very closed-mouth about what was going on over there.

I: So you probably had didn't have very much information about those types of things...

GH: No, no.

I: And quite the surprise when the war was over to see that? What about the day that, the first time you heard that they dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, what was that? Because that had to have been something of that destruction in the lifetime.

GH: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. It was unbelievable. You know, when we read about it, seen it on the newsreels, you know, just what had happened, how much damage it did. It really did do, it was just, never imagined anything could be that destructive.

AUDIO ABRUPTLY ENDS