

Interview with Ted Bogdan

Subject: John D. Voelker

06/03/03

Location: Marquette, MI

Interviewer: Russell Magnaghi

RM: Good morning, Ted. The topic of this interview is John Voelker and his interest in food and beverage and so on. I'll be asking you questions of your memories him. Could you tell us a little about that?

TB: Let me give you a little summary to begin with. Can we do it that way?

RM: Oh yeah, yup.

TB: John was as passionate about food as he is about fly fishing, and music, and his wife. He had certain likes in food. He had a great love for shrimp fried or boiled, either way. We once took a trip down to New Orleans country, Southern Louisiana, looking for a seafood when I was thinking about building a seafood restaurant in Marquette. We ate our fill of all kinds of seafood... fried oysters that were caught at the edge of a cabin sitting on the water... there were alligators in the water. These two people who owned the cabins got their oysters, shucked them, and fried them. And another night we ate in the town and we had crawfish. It was my first experience and I've been with food all of my life. But we ordered the crawfish and the woman asked, "How many do you want? A dozen, two dozen..." and we said, "Well, bring what you want." So the woman brought out about 20 minutes later an old Pabst beer box lined with newspapers, there were newspapers on the table, and she dumped all the crawfish on the table and there must have been 200. And of course to John's eyes and my eyes, my god. And we'd had a couple of old fashioned previously, we had a couple of beers, and usually on our trips we just carry the fixin's for old fashioned in the back of the car. All we had to get was ice. So about half an hour later we finally finished some of the crawfish, but not all. We didn't suck them like the waitress said you should do. We ate the tails. Another time we... he loved his wife's cooking, and she was an excellent cook, just excellent. He especially loved chipped beef on toast. It's a lost art, nobody makes it anymore I don't think. The other thing he loved was cod, creamed cod. It comes in a little wooden box and Grace would soak it and dry it about four or five times with salt, and then she would make a cream sauce and serve it with cream over mashed potatoes. That was really one of his favorite foods. We used to have... three days a week we used to have food cooked at the camp. We had a special fireplace out there, and one of the things we had, having been in the mushroom business years before, I used to make mushroom caps stamped out over the fire on a grill. He loved those. We cooked them just with the juice and salt. One time when Kuralt, Charles Kuralt was making a film about John, he had some of those and he considered those one of the three best foods he'd had in his life. One was catfish from Mississippi, another was chicken from his home state of Carolina, and the other one was those mushrooms. John loved those and he would gulf them down. Sometimes when we got lucky, this time of the year, the springtime, we would catch a few brook trout. We used to keep a few in those days, which we don't anymore, but we did then. A couple times a year we'd had... the Upper Peninsula is a brook trout feed, so we'd gather

fresh morels, brook trout, and I forget the third thing we'd get that was so common to the UP. Once in a great while we'd eat a few wildies, but it was brook trout and morels. That was *the* meal of the year.

RM: So you'd just do this once a year?

TB: Once a year usually, sometimes twice. Once a year in the spring. That opened up the season for fishing. He loved different kinds of seafood. Like I said before, he loved shrimp, but we used to have a restaurant at the top of the old hotel, a seafood restaurant, where they could fix oysters Rockefeller, clams casino, and he would love those. But that was considered exotic, it was not the common, everyday food that he ate. Then towards his later years he would get Russo's cooked chicken. I believe it was in Negaunee. That was his favorite food at that time towards the end of his life. That's about it for now.

RM: Did he like Italian food?

TB: He loved Italian food.

RM: What were some of the places that he would have it? Did he in Ishpeming?

TB: I'm not really acquainted with that, but he did... I don't know if he ate Italian food there or not. But he had a close friend, Bigs Gagliardi, and Bigs would once in a while cook at the camp and bring out all kinds of Italian dishes that John dearly loved. Chicken roasted in a pan with breadcrumbs on top. I don't know the name of that dish, but Bigs makes it beautifully.

RM: Were these mushrooms... these were just regular mushrooms that were on a barbecue grill?

TB: On a barbecue grill. You'd pull the stem out, put the mushrooms on top of the grill not too close to the heat, and soften them with the juice of the mushroom that would gather inside as it cooks. Then you'd drink the juice first. You wait till it cools off, you drink the juice, and then you eat the mushroom. That is the true essence of the flavor of a mushroom.

RM: Now was this something that you had developed? Could you talk a little about your interest in mushrooms, mushroom collecting, and morels?

TB: When I first moved to the UP... my grandfather was from Europe, and my father had taught me mushrooms that we picked in Illinois. There was probably three different varieties that we could safely eat. When I got to the Upper Peninsula, this is the fairyland of mushroomdom. There's seven or eight hundred varieties of mushrooms up here, and there's at least 25 or 30 that are safe to eat. Different flavors, different textures, some are liked by many people, some are particular tastes. In the UP we met Ingrid Bartelli, who was the mushroom expert of the UP, and was the northern representative for Dr. Alexander Smith from the University of Michigan, who at that time was the foremost authority on wild mushrooms in the world. We did a lot of mushroom hunting. I wouldn't say picking, because you didn't always find them, but we did a lot of mushroom hunting. In fact, Dr. Smith came up a couple of times and with Ingrid and Dr. Smith we would end up at camp and cook whatever mushrooms we found.

RM: Was this something that the two of you... or John would do at this time of the year? Was there a certain time of the year?

TB: The season started with the black morels. We had special places where we would look every year. Every year is not a good year, but this year is one of the best in existence. What were we talking about?

RM: We were talking about the location of the... you started about the location of the black morels.

TB: Black morels. Morel pickers have their favorite locations which are kept secret. When they die that secret goes with it. The better part is the middle part of May and the first part of June. The white morels would come up around elm trees, of course now we don't have any elm trees, but for some reason they still insist on growing in some areas. That's one of the great things about mushrooms is the mystery that's associated with them. They don't know why... There are scientists finding out more and more things about mushrooms, but the mystery is not totally solved. The other mushrooms that would come up right after that were called the "oyster mushrooms". They came out in layers on the side of dead or dying poplar trees. They're very peppery flavored. The smallest ones are good if you throw them in a stir fry, and we would do that at the camp. About the last to catch... John found the earliest chanterelles, which is another excellent mushroom, the 28th of June. He was very proud that he found those. Usually those don't come out till the middle or end of July, and they continue on after almost the first of September. Another mushroom we hunted that came out usually in the end of July, first part of August, is the Chanterelle... or the Italian porcini. That was an excellent mushroom; large and spongy underneath, some can weigh a pound.

RM: Are those the portabella mushrooms?

TB: No, do you want to hear about the portabella?

RM: Yeah.

TB: I grew up in a mushroom business. My dad grew the first... in fact, the white mushroom was first discovered growing in a group of brown mushrooms in about the 1920's. Italian mushroom growers were growing them in Pennsylvania. Italians were the first to start mushroom growing in the United States. They grew roses on top of beds, and underneath the beds they started putting composted horse manure and grew mushrooms. The only mushrooms that they knew of were the brown mushrooms. It was called the bohemian queen at that time. One day in one of those mushroom plants they found one that was white. From that, most of the mushrooms that you see today that are white, came from some of those first mushrooms. In later years... my dad grew some of the bohemian queens. It's a much more solid mushroom, much more flavorful. But nowadays they grow them in... they're called crimini when they're medium sized and when you get into the very large size they're called portabellas. Portabellos, portabellas, but it's the same mushroom.

RM: You said you were from Illinois... what did your father do for a living? Did he grow mushrooms?

TB: He grew mushrooms. He saw an ad in the Chicago Tribune one day saying there were some old wineries for rent in a town about 45 miles south of Chicago; Frankfort, Illinois. They were built on the side of a hill overlooking a creek. There was three layers... not layers, what do they call it?

RM: Stories?

TB: Stories, thank you. So they grew mushrooms in a limestone cave. But that's a very bad place to grow mushrooms because there are disease that don't effect human beings, but they wipe out mushroom crops.

RM: Oh these caves... the wineries weren't good for growing mushrooms?

TB: Too hard to control conditions. Mushrooms exist on certain amounts of moisture, humidity, and they have to have good ventilation. It's a very scientific pattern of growth protection.

RM: What would he do with them then? Sell them locally or send them to Chicago?

TB: We'd send them to Chicago, seven days a week.

RM: So how many would you say he was able to produce in a week.

TB: Are you interested?

RM: Yeah, I'm fascinated by this.

TB: Mushrooms don't produce seeds, they produce spores. And the spore makers, you would take the mushroom cap and set it upside down on paper, and overnight you would get a brown print underneath the mushroom. Well they'd take those spores and in those days you would take them and put them in a glass filled with compost and pack it in with spoons or something. They'd throw in the spores, incubate that for three or four weeks, give it a little bit of moisture, and at the end of that time the whole mushroom manure has now become mycelium, the root system of the mushroom.

RM: Oh?

TB: We'd actually take that and break it with a hammer. All of that glass on the outside... we'd always have slivers of glass in our fingers. You couldn't get rid of all of them. We'd break that into about 40 or 50 pieces and plant them along. Meanwhile we fermented manure outside in about three or four wooden beds 14 to 18-feet high. We'd fill those up with manure, compost that, get it up to a temperature of about 175. In fact, we'd get it hotter than that so we could kill some of the bad microorganisms and hopefully keep the good ones which mycelium would grow on. And at the end of that time you'd bring the temperature down about 75 degrees and then you would plant the spawn. It was actually putting a thumb into this compost, lifting it up, putting in a piece of spawn, and clamping it down. You'd grow that with moisture for about two to three weeks and then we'd cover that with an inch of topsoil. Nowadays they use sphagnum moss and some other items too. But in about two-week's time you'd see little tiny white pinnings growing on top, then in about another two weeks you'd see mushrooms growing; some of them quite large. Then you'd pick mushrooms from then on for about sixty days.

RM: From that one crop?

TB: From that one crop you would go for about sixty days if you grew from about 58 to 62 degrees. If you wanted to grow it at a cooler temperature from about 54 to 56 degrees you would get a more solid mushroom, but fewer mushrooms. That would go about three months. Nowadays people like Campbell's Soup grow mushrooms for about 30 days, get the maximum amount of mushrooms, tear everything all out, and start all over again. We did the same thing, but we just didn't do it in that short a period of time.

RM: Now your father was from Poland?

TB: Yeah.

RM: And he learned this in the old country?

TB: No, he learned it on the Westside of Chicago. He had a friend that had been in the army with him, the Polish Expeditionary Force, and he started growing mushrooms on his own. My dad helped him and figured he'd do the same thing when he saw the ad in the paper.

RM: Oh, I see. What was your dad's name?

TB: Alois, A-L-O-I-S.

RM: And he did that then all of his life?

TB: Yeah.

RM: Oh, that's a pretty unique occupation.

TB: It is. My brother and I both worked in the business from the time I was four-years-old. You know how the immigrants make their kids... mushroom boxes. From four-years-old I'd work two hours a day. By the time I was seven I was working eight, nine hours. My brother too.

RM: Now were there other Polish people living in Frankfort, Illinois?

TB: No, no.

RM: He just moved there because of the winery?

TB: It's interesting, there were only three families that were not German in the town. The town was third-generation Germans. They came over in the 1870's.

RM: Okay, I was just fascinated by that.

TB: It really is fascinating. If I was 100 years younger I would get back into it.

RM: Did anyone in the Upper Peninsula... I know years ago when I was first here George Yvorre was running for some political office and talked about using the heat from the mines to develop a mushroom industry. Did anyone ever do that up here?

TB: I don't know for sure. I do know that they would have run into a lot of trouble. Any time you have a place like that that's enclosed... you can give it proper ventilation, but it's expensive. Everything is expensive. The mushroom is a very labor expensive work. There's no automatic picking machines, you've got to do it all by hand.

RM: So even these Campbell's... out in California along the coast south of San Francisco they had these big warehouse type structures where Campbell's...

TB: Right, that's what we did.

RM: Yeah, but all of that then has to be done by hand. Even Campbell's has to do it.

TB: They have experimented with different kinds of machines, but you still have to pick them.

RM: Okay, let me get back to John Voelker. Could you tell us a little about the crew that camped? In one of his books... well two of them... in *Danny and The Boys*, and another one... he talks about Mulligan's Stew... it's kind of a stew made with all sorts of game, venison, rabbit, and so on. Did he ever do things like that?

TB: No.

RM: Okay, never anything like that.

TB: John liked to have other people cook for him.

RM: I see. Did he ever have other people make it for him [laughs]? Did you ever make it for him?

TB: I didn't. I made stew out there quite a few times. Opening day was a big ceremony and at the Holiday Inn they used to put on St. Silvanus Day, a holy day of obligation to go fishing.

RM: [Laughs]

TB: That was for brook trout, and there was a big celebration.

RM: Could you explain the event?

TB: It was just of a gathering of people who had come into John's life at one time or another. Could be a guy he played cribbage with at a tavern in Ishpeming, or it could be Charles Kuralt, all kinds of sportswriters at the time, but a lot of the local people who he had known throughout his life thought he was very generous with his time.

RM: The other thing that kind of became his trademark, he sort of didn't have time for the stranger... the intrusive individual that would come into his life.

TB: That's not completely true. He would write about it. He would express his feelings about strangers. He has one story about a big trout that came around and he called him something with a stranger. He didn't suffer fellows easily, but he was always extremely sharp when it came to human beings. He could tell a faker immediately. It wouldn't take him long.

RM: So then you'd have this big opening day celebration. What was the usual food and drink that they would have?

TB: Usually you would bring out some food. Quite often I would make a stew. It always had mushrooms in it. Either domestic raised mushrooms, or morels, or both. It's always been, seven years past it's always been the last Saturday in April. The weather wasn't always that great, and the fishing certainly wasn't great, but it was a time for celebration... the beginning of the season.

RM: Could you share any of these recipes like the stew? Or the one that I would be interested in is the recipe for the old fashioned.

TB: John made the best old fashioned, and that's not just according to me and my friends, but according to anybody that ever had one. Originally he would pour a little bit of water in an old-fashioned glass, which is a big glass, and he would measure it with one cube of sugar. Then he would pour in the booze, which was Cabin Still to begin with, then it was Evan Williams, and then later on it became Jim Beam. But the times I remember the best we had a lot of Cabin Still. Later on they changed the formula or something and it just wasn't the same. People were always bringing him bottles of booze at all times. They seemed to think that the more they paid for a bottle of booze, the better it should be, which is not true. Good old Jim Beam or Cabin Still, still made the best drink. Then after he'd put in the booze... that first drink was always an extremely healthy drink [laughs]. It was two ounce shots at least of bourbon, then he squeeze in a slice of orange in there, and usually... to begin with we used to use maraschino

cherries and then just a couple of drops of bitters. It's hard to believe, but two people can make them side-by-side and they'll taste different, and he made the best.

RM: So he would make them individually then for the group?

TB: He'd make them individually. There'd be six, eight, ten people, they'd all help, but... oh, and then you had to have ice cubes in it. You had to have a lot of ice.

RM: Were there any other drinks that were popular with him?

TB: Nope.

RM: That was it?

TB: That was it. If you wanted anything else you didn't even say anything. And it satisfied everybody, everybody liked it.

RM: I know after I heard this I started drinking old fashioned and I found that you could get a very good one at the Elks Club in Ishpeming. It was almost the farther you went from Ishpeming the old fashioned become...

TB: Any commercial drink now, the secret to it is it's a boozy drink. If you don't like that then don't drink it. The first drink we would drink heavy with booze, and then after that we would just add a little water and a little bourbon. We didn't make the whole thing.

RM: Oh you'd keep just kind of nursing the original glass?

TB: The original drink. It got weaker and weaker, but you didn't notice the difference [laughs].

RM: Uh-huh, okay. Now did he...

TB: My son Tom, who's my bartender up at the Clarion and also at the Holiday Inn, makes the second best old fashioned, and he learned from John.

RM: Now were there any bars up in Ishpeming that were John's favorites.

TB: Number one was Bigs's place, I can't remember the name of it.

RM: Congress?

TB: The rest of us would call it Jeeve's, but that's not the name of it. Roosevelt! And the other one where he played cribbage all the time, I can't remember the name of that, but that was a dear place. He'd go pick up his mail at his house and then we'd go play a couple of games of cribbage at this bar. The bar was a no foolishness bar and all the old-timers would be in there. They'd call him Johnny, "How you doing Johnny?" There's no pretense about John, and people liked that.

RM: When he would go fishing what was the process of eating the fish that he caught?

TB: Well, number one, you rarely ate the fish that he caught. That one feed in the beginning was it. Once in a great while they'd bring trout...

[END OF SIDE A]

RM: Okay, so his fishing was for sport rather than bringing fish home for consumption?

TB: I don't know what the word sport means, although that's used a lot. Fishing was to be fishing. At least what it means to me is to be out in the open and when you wade streams around every bend is a new world. That's a part of it. A lot of people try to spread the feeling of "Why do you spend all that damn time fishing?" Well, it's hard to describe, but there's a certain amount of freedom out there. You have to love the woods, and you have to love the fresh air. You have to love the possibility of seeing some mushrooms. It all goes together. John had this ability to condense everything he saw that way in a few words. That was a part of, I think, his writing ability. As the years went by John went through the act of fishing and he still was excited, because the bugs were hatching and the fish were rising and it was exciting. He loved the feeling, and he loved to observe other people fishing. Although he liked to fish alone a lot. In fact, you'll find a lot of men, and women now too, who really love to fish alone. It's a form of meditation, it's a form of... I don't know.

RM: You sort of have to do it. I've been out a few times and...

TB: Do you like to fish?

RM: I did it a few times, but not regularly, but what you say is very true. You're out on the stream and when other people are around you it's not the same thing. They're kind of in the way.

TB: There's not a lot of comradery. If that's what you want, join the local poker club.

RM: Yeah [laughs].

RM: Now would you say that the descriptions that John would have in his stories are right out of his experiences in the woods or wherever?

TB: Absolutely. John always carried a little notebook in his pocket. He used to write five, six times a week. He was fascinated by words, and how to use a word in a certain situation, in a writing. He would write these down, but he also wrote down the day and what it was like. He was extremely observant without knowing he was.

RM: He just had that ability then to do that?

TB: Right.

RM: Were there any special recipes or foods that John liked that you'd like to share with us? You said you made stew, was there something special? Was it your particular stew?

TB: There was nothing special, just my way of doing it. That's all. Every cook has their way of doing it. I always used a lot of mushrooms, mainly because that's how I grew up. We grew mushrooms and would eat mushrooms seven days a week. In fact, when we had our first Holiday Inn, the one in Joliet and the one here, the salesman used to kid us as, they expected us to grate it on cereal in the morning. Because we did... I used mushrooms in so many different ways, and John liked that. Also we deep fried mushrooms and he liked those too.

RM: So sort of mushrooms in any shape or form he was interested in.

TB: Right.

RM: When did you come to Marquette? When did you meet John and what were the circumstances?

TB: You aren't going to get more into the personal stuff now.

RM: Oh, well just keep it general then.

[TAPE CLICKS]

RM: I have a question here, when did you come to Marquette?

TB: I'm not sure of the day exactly, around 1977-78.

RM: Could you talk a little about John's smoking habits, pipes, cigars, and the story about the Italian cigar? There's one story about him smoking Toscano cigars.

TB: The truth of the matter is he did smoke Toscanos, but his favorite was Pierogis. At different times with availability if they didn't have Pierogis... for some reason... they outfit that makes them is in Pennsylvania. They're Italian, but they were made in Pennsylvania.

RM: Right.

TB: He loved cigars. He would smoke them and gnaw on them in the side of his mouth. As he got older he lost a lot of his teeth. He had two or three teeth only, and he'd call them cloves. Believe it or not he had a partial put in, but that didn't add much to it. He could still eat sweet corn. He learned how to bite around those two or three teeth [laughs]. He loved sweet corn. What was the other thing you asked?

RM: About the cigars and his...

TB: Cigars, he would gnaw on them later on. In fact, finally he was told to quit smoking and he hated that, because he didn't really smoke that much, he liked to gnaw on it. Then he started getting sores in his mouth so he had to quit altogether. But he dearly loved to puff on a cigar and play cribbage.

RM: What about smoking a pipe.

TB: Never saw him smoke a pipe. He had probably done that in his earlier years, but that didn't go on too long.

RM: Oh, okay. Because in the exhibit in the garage barn behind the house there were corn cob pipes and he had an empty can of Dill tobacco.

TB: That was a famous pipe tobacco.

RM: So we took it, you know, to anybody else it would be seen as garbage, and we have it on display. We just want to make sure that it was a correct, you know? But this would have been earlier in his life he was into smoking pipes. Oh, and there was a story... what was the story of him drinking out of a tin cup?

TB: Most of the years John always had a fish car. He'd call it a fish car, and his wife could have the second car. And in the fish car, which was a real jungle, but you always knew if you looked long enough you'd find what you wanted [laughs]. But he always carried right in the back a little cooler with ice cubes, the tin cubs, the sugar cubes, and the bitters. The tin cups where what we'd drink out of. We'd

make the old fashioned in a tin cup. A tin cup is not as big as an old fashioned glass, but he'd put the same amount of booze in it [laughs]. And I always carried a bottle of fresh water.

RM: So this was just something that wherever he went, this went with him?

TB: Right. Even on our trips south. We took two trips south and we always had the makings in the back. I would like to tell you one story, if it's...

RM: Go on.

TB: We... I was involved with Holiday Inns. I used to be on their board so I used to be down in Memphis every two or three weeks. One time we drove from here all the way down to Memphis and he was so damn proud that we made it all the way [laughs]. The next morning we headed down for New Orleans area, I can't think of the names of the towns anymore, Cajun country, Evangeline country. And we got down there, and I had been there before, so I said, "If you'd like I'll take you right to the gulf" and he says, "What do you mean gulf?" and I says, "The gulf. Saltwater. Call it the ocean if you'd like." So two days later we ended up at the gulf, and the sun was just setting. I have pictures of this somewhere. We toasted each other with old fashioned right on the Gulf of Mexico, and the sun was just beautiful. It was just coming down and he says, "It's not a lake town, where's the lake?" and I said, "Here!" and I splashed water in his mouth. But he'd had enough to drink and he said, "It is salty."

RM & TB: [Laughs]

RM: So you went on two trips down to Louisiana?

TB: Well one trip was to Louisiana and the other was just down south. Down to the gulf again, but further east.

RM: I think we've gone through most of these...

TB: You keep asking about those recipes.

RM: Oh, yes.

TB: It's hard for me to think of any of the recipes. Stews were made *comme ci comme ca*. Whatever I had, I'd usually start it at the Holiday Inn and finish it down there.

RM: What did you use as a base? Wine or just...

TB: Oh yeah, wine always. That's the Italian part of me. I always use red wine when I cook stew.

RM: Oh, you're Italian background as well?

TB: No, no. I grew up with Italians though.

RM: Oh, you were surrounded by them, okay.

TB: I'm just trying to think. We cooked stew all the time and we certainly did eat fish. So I was trying to think of meals, because we ate out there quite a bit. Steaks, chicken breast, or make a more complicated dish which I would start earlier in the day and we'd take it out there to eat.

RM: So even though he didn't cook he would eat quite well? He would try all of these different things. He wasn't just meat and potatoes.

TB: Oh he did. He ate a variety.

RM: So you mentioned the creamed cod was a favorite.

TB: Very much a favorite. So was the chipped beef, but the creamed cod by far was. He liked several foods really.

RM: How about things like pasties? Was that a favorite with him?

TB: His wife Grace was an excellent pasty-maker. Is that machine on? Turn it off for a minute.

[TAPE CLICKS]

TB: But Grace's were good. She made them with love.

RM: So it was sort of eclectic foods and good foods that you'd usually cook up?

TB: It was basically the UP. Even though he had travelled some. He liked good tasting foods, which probably means that it had to have some flavor. Nowadays some of these restaurants are afraid to put flavor into a dish, because they're all afraid that they would offend somebody with too much salt, or too much this, or too much that.

RM: Right.

RM: Now, when you had the Crow's Nest, did he frequently come up there and have meals?

TB: He was up there five, six days a week.

RM: Oh?

TB: When I had the Holiday Inn I had everything arranged so we'd fish together five, six days a week. I'd get up at six in the morning, get everything done that I could, stopped at breakfast service, whatever needed to be done. By 11 or 12 o'clock John would come around and we'd go down to the ponds down Alger County, then we'd be back at the Inn by 4:30 or 6 o'clock and he'd sit and have some h'orderves. That was our schedule every week. When I got the Crow's Nest I had to spend more time there. Still we tried to get out to the camp as much as possible, but we had our own soda fountain there. We could have all the sodas we wanted [laughs]. I also had an oyster bar. He loved the oysters. We had a piano up there and every once in a while he'd get up and play the piano. His favorite was always *As Time Goes By*.

RM: Okay, is there anything that I haven't mentioned, or some topic that I didn't bring up?

TB: You got a variation. You got more than I thought I was going to give you.

RM: I guess one of the questions is, how did he get into drinking old fashioned? Was there some story?

TB: If there is I don't know it, but he considered all other drinks fancy. There's nothing fancy in an old fashioned. But Martinis, Manhattans, he said those were fancy drinks and he didn't care for them. He may have drank them, I don't know. I don't know that time of his life. But what he really loved was the flavor of an old fashioned. The taste of the orange.

RM: Because I know in *Danny and The Boys* he talks about where he goes to the Mather Inn, and John then writes about these upscale mine officials sitting in happy hours drinking martinis. It's interesting now that you say this, because now that I think about it, it was kind of a fancy drink. The upper class people were drinking it and Danny was just drinking whiskey.

TB: I don't know for sure, but I think part of that is also that he was a born liberal. He loved to be with those people, he found them interesting. He wrote about them [laughs]. But he didn't especially care for their way of life. When he writes about how they had the fancy drink he's also making a comment.

RM: That's interesting because in that section he talks about the Mather Inn and how it was designed by a Boston architect and... yeah, he makes it the sort of playground for the rich... the mine owners and so on. That was sort of an interesting social comment.

TB: Yeah.

RM: Okay, well I think that that's all the questions that I have for you. Well, thank you. Those were some good insights and I'll use this well.

TB: You're very welcome.