

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
Chattanooga - Hamilton County Public Library
Chattanooga, Tennessee

An Interview With
ISABELLE S. SHUMACKER
And
LEOPOLD SHUMACKER, JR.

By
Dr. Ralph Anderson
May 29, 1985

CHATTANOOGA - HAMILTON COUNTY BICENTENNIAL LIBRARY

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

PERSONAL DATA SHEET

Date May 29, 1985

1. Full name (include maiden name and married name, where applies):
Isabelle S. Shumacker (Schwartz)

2. Current address and phone number:
510 E. Brow
Lookout Mountain, Tennessee 37350
821-1692

3. Date and Place of Birth:
1886 Chattanooga, Tennessee

4. Mother's maiden name: Henrietta Poss
Place of Birth: Sandusky, Ohio

5. Father's name: Henry Schwartz
Place of Birth: Budapest, Hungary

6. Spouse's name:
Dr. Leopold Shumacker

7. Children's names and addresses (if possible). Indicate daughters married names:
Leopold Shumacker, Jr.
Jane Seidman (Mrs. Harold A.)

PREFACE

This manuscript is a transcript of an interview conducted for the Oral History Project of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Public Library. The purpose of the project is to capture the first-hand accounts of the social history of the Chattanooga area in the twentieth century.

The reader is asked to bear in mind that the transcript reflects the patterns of the spoken, rather than the written, word. The information is presented as it was recalled by the interviewee at the occasion of the interview and has been edited only for clarity.

Use of the tape and transcript is administered under the same rules and regulations as other materials in the Local History Department. Literary rights to the tape and transcript are held by the library and permission for duplication or use in publication must be obtained from the Director of Libraries.

Two indexes have been prepared for locating specific information from either the transcript or the tape. The page index to the transcript is located at the end of this volume. A meter count number has been given in the left margin of the text for locating a section on the tape. It should be noted that this number will vary depending on the equipment used.

Funding for this project was provided by local foundations and organizations, including the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga, the Chattanooga Area Historical Association, and the National Society of Colonial Dames, Chattanooga Committee. The project was sponsored and administered by the library.

Editor's note: Portions of the taped interview have been omitted from the transcript due to Mrs. Shumacker having difficulty in hearing the questions asked. Present at the interview was her son, Leopold, Jr., who she frequently calls upon for clarification or an actual response. Leopold is conversing with her and directly responds to some of the interviewer's questions.

INTRODUCTION

Mrs. Shumacker was born in Chattanooga on High Street in the year 1886. She is now ninety-nine years old. Her many experiences traverse horse and buggy, gas lamps and small-town Chattanooga to its present status as an important southern city. Her early memories include recollections of teachers such as Miss Clara Carpenter at the First District School on Oak and Douglas Streets. She also remembers seeing the first automobiles in Chattanooga, a motorcade visit by President and Mrs. McKinley.

She married Dr. Leopold Shumacker in 1911 after teaching school for four years in Chattanooga. She was unable to continue teaching school as, at that time, it was not acceptable for married women to be teachers in this community.

This interview is a continuation of the Chattanooga - Hamilton County Public Library's Oral History Project.

Anderson: My name's Ralph Anderson and I'm working with a library project. The public library of Chattanooga is interested in talking to many of the older citizens in Chattanooga because of their memories of what Chattanooga was like years ago, and there's so much we can learn from you.
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Isabelle: I wish I knew and remembered more.

Anderson: Well, I'm sure you remember a great deal.

Isabelle: We were up here on Lookout Mountain a good deal.

Anderson: Were you born in Chattanooga?

Isabelle: Yes, I was born on [413] High Street.

Anderson: High Street?

Isabelle: Do you know where that is?

Anderson: No, ma'am.

Leopold: You don't know where High Street is?

Anderson: No, sir, I don't. (laughter)

Leopold: It runs from Second Street over to Georgia Avenue; it goes into Georgia Avenue near Fifth.

Anderson: Okay, all right, yes, I know where that is now.
019

Leopold: It runs over to Hunter Museum.

Anderson: So, that's just right downtown that you were born.

Isabelle: Yes, of course.

Anderson: When were you born?

Isabelle: It was a little bitty city, little town, when I was born here, and we moved down on [403 Cherry] Fourth Street later when the family got too big for High.

Anderson: In what year were you born, Mrs. Shumacker?

Isabelle: 1886.

Anderson: Same year my grandfather was born.

Isabelle: February the fourth, nearly a hundred years ago.
025

Anderson: Were you born in a house or in Erlanger? Was Erlanger Hospital even here then [established 1891]?

Isabelle: I know the house was.

Leopold: I don't know. Babies were always born in houses in those days.
027

Isabelle: Let me see. I think it was up here on High Street, right there. I don't think people in those days knew much about going to the hospital for such a thing.

Anderson: Were your parents born in this country?

Isabelle: My -- let me see -- where was my --

Leopold: Your mother was born in Sandusky, Ohio.

Isabelle: My mother was born up in Ohio, in Fremont, Ohio.

Leopold: Sandusky.

Isabelle: Sandusky. They moved to Fremont.

Anderson: What was her maiden name?

Isabelle: Her name was Poss, P-O-S-S, Henrietta. They called her Jennie.

Anderson: And she was born in Ohio. Where was your father born?

Isabelle: I think my father [Henry Schwartz] was born over in -- where was he?

Leopold: Budapest, I think.

Isabelle: Budapest.

Anderson: In Hungary, yes.

Isabelle: And they came over here, his parents came over.

Anderson: Oh, his parents came over with him when he was a child.

Isabelle: After, of course.

Anderson: And they moved to Ohio?

Isabelle: No, wait, let me see.

039

Leopold: Murfreesboro, I think. Murfreesboro, near Nashville. *

Isabelle: Oh, yes, yes, over there. My memory's very bad.

Anderson: Oh, no, I think it's fine. So your parents, your mother and father moved to Murfreesboro?

Isabelle: I don't know.

Leopold: Not her mother; it was her father's parents that came over to
046 this country, and brought her father as a tiny child. He was born in 1856 [1855] or -- yes, it must have been '56 he was born, and they came over here during the Civil War. She used to tell about her father, as a little boy, going out to make a little money by selling coffee to the Union soldiers.

Isabelle: That's right.

Anderson: Your father did that? He sold coffee to the Union soldiers? Where was this?

Isabelle: Where was it?

Leopold: In Nashville was what you told me.

Isabelle: Over there. He remembers better than I do.

Leopold: Well, I remember what she told me.

Isabelle: We told him all these things, and I forget them.

Anderson: Did your father have any store? Oh, your father was just a baby when he came over here from Budapest.

Leopold: He was a baby.
056

Isabelle: Oh, yes. I wish I could hear.

Anderson: I'll speak louder, I'm sorry. Okay. Where were you raised as a little girl, Mrs. Shumacker?

Isabelle: In Chattanooga.

Anderson: Downtown Chattanooga on High Street.

* Schwartz's obituary says the family first settled in Cleveland, Ohio, and then moved to Nashville.

Isabelle: Yes. No, we moved when the family got too big for the house; they moved down Fourth and Cherry, and there were six of us, six children. And we went to public school and --

Anderson: What school did you go to?

Isabelle: 062 First District. I don't know whether it's still there now. It was out there on --

Leopold: No, it's that school called the Clara Carpenter School. It was at the corner where part of the university is, on the corner of Douglas and Oak Street.

Anderson: Oh, yes.

Isabelle: Is it still there?

Anderson: No, the school's gone.

Leopold: I saw it when I was a boy, but it was torn down years ago.

Anderson: So, you went to school at First District School, that was called then.

Isabelle: 073 Yes, eighth grade, and then I wanted to -- from there I went to high school. Where was -- that was on Eighth Street, up there on Eighth [Chattanooga High School]. And then I wanted to go to college, and I had made up my mind. I read what a good time they had (laughter); that was my idea. And I went, and when I was telling my -- talking about it -- my father couldn't afford -- he had six children -- to send me to one of those fashionable eastern colleges. And while he was standing there, a man said, "Why don't you send her to Ohio Wesleyan? That's where my children go." So, I went to Ohio Wesleyan for four years, and had a lovely time. (laughter) And specialized in languages.

Anderson: What languages? French?

Isabelle: French and German. French I particularly liked. Do you know anything of it?

Anderson: Very little.

Isabelle: And I loved it, I thought it was so pretty. And I brought the languages down to our school. We didn't have any -- it was a little town, you know -- and I taught French and German. And one boy said, "I want to know Spanish." I says, "I don't know it." They wanted me to learn it, so I kept one lesson ahead. (laughter)

Anderson: I know what that's like.

Leopold: In those days the Chattanooga High School was at the corner of
088 Eighth and Lindsay; there's a parking lot there now, but I
remember seeing it. It later became Dickinson Junior High,
and Chattanooga -- City High School moved over to where River-
side School is now.

Anderson: I see.

Leopold: And still later moved again. That's where she went to school
and where she taught, also, when she met my father.

Isabelle: What?

Leopold: Dickinson. I said that's where you taught and that's where
you continued to teach till you met Father.

Isabelle: Move over this way, I can hear you better.

Anderson: What was school like when you were going as a student, when
you were a young girl in school? Do you have any memories
of what school was?

Isabelle: Up on Eighth Street?

Anderson: Yes.

Isabelle: Well, yes, it was very nice. I don't know what you mean,
though, what was it like.

Anderson: Well, was it very difficult? What kinds of subjects did they
teach at that school?

Isabelle: Oh, I took -- in high school I took the languages -- what I
took or what I taught?

Anderson: What you took as a student when you were a young girl.

Isabelle: Oh, I took -- I had to take math, we had to go through algebra
099 and the -- what was it?

Anderson: Geometry?

Isabelle: And I liked the other -- what was the other?

Leopold: Geometry.

Isabelle: Geometry, I liked geometry better than I did algebra for some
reason. I don't know why, but I did, enjoyed it.

Anderson: Do you remember any of your teachers when you were in school
105 as a student?

Isabelle: Miss [Eula Lea] Jarnigan was, wasn't she?

Leopold: Did Miss Jarnigan or Miss Tommie [Payne] Duffy teach you?
Yes, I guess they did -- they later founded GPS [Girls'
Preparatory School]. Did they teach you? Yes, they did,
they taught Momma.

Isabelle: Did she teach me?

Leopold: Miss Tommie Duffy taught you.

Isabelle: Oh, yes, Miss Tommie Duffy.

Anderson: And she later founded GPS?

Leopold: Yes, she and Miss Jarnigan. She also taught my sister [Jane
(Mrs. Harold) Seidman].

Isabelle: Oh, yes, Miss Tommie. And in those days she let us call her
"Miss Tommie," but when she became one of the principals years
later had to call her "Miss Duffy."

Anderson: Oh (laughter).

Leopold: I met her one time. She was very nice and had the brightest
eyes, she was really nice. I met her at her house up here
on High Street. She was nice.

Anderson: Do you remember any of your other teachers, names of any of
them?

Isabelle: Oh, Miss Jarnigan, I said, and Miss Grace McCallie.
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Leopold: Did Miss Clara Carpenter teach you, Mother?

Isabelle: Yes, she was principal [of First District School, 1896-1940].

Leopold: Oh, she was?

Isabelle: Yes, principal, Miss Clara Carpenter. It seems to me she
ought to be living now. (laughter)

Anderson: Were there any other Jewish children in the school at that
time?

Isabelle: I just don't know.

Leopold: There were a couple; there was one that you were -- was contesting you for the honors. Her name was Teresa something.

Isabelle: Shalolin, Teresa Shalolin, S-H-A-L-O-L-I-N, I think. Oh, yes. 123 [Ed.: pronunciation and spelling of name are different; unable to verify name.]

Anderson: And you were both going after the same honor?

Isabelle: Yes.

Anderson: What honor was that that you were competing for? A scholastic honor? Were you competing for a scholastic award?

Isabelle: I can't hear.

Leopold: Were you competing for a scholastic honor? You were, because of the Teachers' Honor, you said.

Isabelle: Oh, yes, they gave it to me. I think it was because they didn't like -- there was another Jewish girl, and they didn't like her. I didn't expect to get it, I wasn't even thinking about it. But she was -- I don't know why they didn't like her, but somehow or other it was just her expression. I was so surprised when somebody said, "They gave you the Teachers' Honor." I felt bad, and I ran out and I told her. And with that, she burst out crying; she wanted it and worked for it. 135

Anderson: Was there a Jewish community -- were there a lot of Jewish people in Chattanooga back in those days? Was there an area where they all lived, most Jewish people lived?

Isabelle: I don't remember. Let me see.

Anderson: Was there a synagogue?

Isabelle: Oh, yes.

Anderson: What was the name of that?

Isabelle: They called it "The Temple." The old orthodox was called "The Synagogue."

Leopold: I think you told me there was a rabbi, Herr Butler. When your mother and father were married there was no rabbi here, but they were married by the father of Adolph [S.] Ochs who was sort of a lay preacher or rabbi, but not ordained. And they -- you know the -- it's called the Ochs Memorial, he [Adolph] gave the money for it. It's the Julius and Bertha Ochs, and Julius Ochs was Adolph Ochs' father. 149

Anderson: I see.

Leopold: And he was the one who married Mother's mother and father.

Anderson: And your mother and father were married here in Chattanooga?

Isabelle: Oh, yes, right here.

Anderson: When was there a temple? When was the first rabbi that came to Chattanooga? Would you remember that? Who the first rabbi was?

Leopold: I don't think so. I never heard her say.
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Isabelle: No, I wouldn't know it.

Leopold: But they would know that out at Temple. Rabbi [Kenneth A.] Kanter, he would have all those records out there [Mizpah Congregation].

Anderson: Was there an area where most Jewish people lived? Was there a Jewish community as such?

Isabelle: I don't remember that either.

Anderson: They lived all over, maybe.

Isabelle: I don't remember, I wish I could tell you more.

Anderson: When you were a young girl, was there any prejudice against Jewish people in Chattanooga when you were young?

Isabelle: Yes, always, always. It seems to me I've always felt that.

Leopold: And yet your father was at one time the mayor of Chattanooga.

Isabelle: Yes, oh, yes.

Anderson: What was your father's first name, I didn't hear you.
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Isabelle: Henry.

Anderson: Henry Shumacker?

Leopold: No, Henry Schwartz.

Anderson: Oh, Henry Schwartz, I'm sorry.

Isabelle: My mother's was Poss before they married.

Anderson: Your father was the mayor of Chattanooga for awhile? He was the mayor of Chattanooga?

Isabelle: No.

Leopold: Yes, Papa was mayor of Chattanooga one time.

Isabelle: Was he?

Leopold: You told me he was.*

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Isabelle: Well, I guess I just forgot. I've got a good forgetter.

Leopold: He had a shoe store down -- called H. Schwartz and Son -- between Seventh and Eighth Street on Market Street.

Anderson: Oh, your father ran a shoe store.

Isabelle: Oh, yes. I think there are some people living that remember.

Leopold: H. Schwartz and Son? Why, yes, because it didn't close until '31 [closed in 1932].

Anderson: Did your mother help with the store? Did she stay there?

Isabelle: My mother died on my seventeenth birthday.

Anderson: Oh, that's terrible.

Isabelle: She had gallstones, and in those days they didn't know how to remove them.

Anderson: I see. How old were you when you went to college at Ohio Wesleyan?

Isabelle: I guess I was about nineteen, wasn't I?

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Leopold: No. Now, you went that same year that you graduated. She [her mother] died in February [1903], and you graduated and went off to college.

Isabelle: And I graduated at seventeen. I stayed up there [Ohio Wesleyan], I graduated up there. I went up there just for the -- thinking I would have a good time.

* Mr. Schwartz was elected to the Chattanooga Board of Aldermen in 1883. In 1885, he was reelected to the Board, and chosen mayor pro tem.

- Anderson: Were there very many women in college at that time? Or were there very few of you?
- Isabelle: Not in the South I don't believe, but up there -- and I visited in the home with some friends and met a boy, one of the cousins, and we fell in love. He came over to college to see me.
- Leopold: Charlie Wright was his name.
- Isabelle: Oh, yes, Charlie Wright, W-R-I-G-H-T. I have some things that he gave me, presents. And he became a druggist.
- Leopold: Let me say something Mother told me. When she was going to Ohio Wesleyan, dancing was against the Methodist religion, and girls were not permitted to dance with boys. They would sneak off to Columbus; Ohio Wesleyan was at Delaware, Ohio. They would sneak off to Columbus and have a dance.
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- Isabelle: Columbus. And we'd have dances with boys; they'd let us dance, but they wouldn't let us dance with boys.
- Anderson: I see.
- Isabelle: We danced down in the gymnasium, and then -- so we'd slip off and go down to Columbus and have a good time. (laughter)
- Anderson: Were these fancy "deb" dances with gowns and all that?
- Isabelle: Oh, yes.
- Anderson: Oh, it must have been beautiful.
- Isabelle: Oh, yes, it seems like yesterday.
- Anderson: How did you meet your husband, Mr. Shumacker? Dr. Shumacker, excuse me.
- Isabelle: My cousin married a Shumacker, and she said that his brother was studying, or was a doctor, and he was right serious. She said, "I wish that you could meet my cousin," and she got us introduced, and that was it. (laughter) He was a doctor and --
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- Leopold: How did Aunt Rita meet Uncle Adolph [Shumacker]?
- Isabelle: I don't know that. In New York --
- Leopold: She went up to New York?
- Isabelle: She went up to New York and there they met. A crowd, you know,

(Isabelle): 211 got together. That's what I said after she became -- she told him who was -- she met him [Leopold] who was studying at the University of Pennsylvania in medicine. And she told him she wished he could meet her cousin.

Anderson: Were you teaching when you met Dr. Shumacker? Were you already in Chattanooga teaching?

Isabelle: Was I teaching?

Leopold: Were you teaching when you met Father? Yes, you were. But she met him in 1909.

Isabelle: I understood the question. I was trying to think. Was I?

Leopold: Yes, you were, because you graduated from college in 1907, and you met Father in 1909 and became engaged that year. And he came through Chattanooga to -- well, because his brother's bride-to-be was here, my mother's cousin, first cousin. And his brother, I guess, prevailed on him to come here, and my Aunt Rita, who was my mother's cousin, was a matchmaker. She told Mother, too, "I've got just the man for you," and she told Father that she had just the bride for him. So she was right this time. And my father used to say that she did better for her cousin than she did for herself. (laughter)

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Anderson: So your cousin introduced you to your husband?

Isabelle: Yes.

Anderson: She was acting as a matchmaker?

Isabelle: Yes.

Anderson: Was that customary in Jewish families back in those days, for matchmaking?

Leopold: Now, in the old country, yes, they played the matchmaker. But she was just being --

Anderson: She was just getting involved.

Isabelle: He was from down in -- he was down at --

Leopold: Holly Springs, Mississippi.

Isabelle: Yes, Holly Springs.

Anderson: Your husband was from Mississippi?

Isabelle: Yes.

Anderson: Did all your husband's family live in Mississippi?

Isabelle: Yes, down in Mississippi. And I remember my father admired
242 him very much, and he said -- my father was a Republican and my husband was a Democrat, you know. They all -- the Democrats were all Negroes, they would get -- and my father said, "I don't see how such a fine man could be a Democrat." He told me that, I remember that very clearly.

Anderson: How did you like teaching?

Isabelle: Oh, I liked it, I liked teaching. I like it now.

Anderson: You're teaching me now.

Isabelle: I like teaching.

Anderson: Do you remember any of your students? Any special students that stand out?

Isabelle: Do I?

Leopold: You remember Mrs. Bright. Do you know this fellow, Fletcher [M.] Bright, has a big real estate company?

Isabelle: Oh, yes.

Leopold: Well, his mother -- she's ninety-two next week -- she lives
255 down on the mountain now. She was in Mother's French class in 1911 and Mother remembers her. I don't know whether she remembers any others or not.

Isabelle: Yes, Margaret [White] Bright. There may be some more that I'd recall and wish I'd told you about, later.

Anderson: How long did you teach? For how many years did you teach?

Isabelle: They wouldn't let married women teach in those days.

Anderson: What?

Leopold: And furthermore, no man wanted his wife to be teaching because it reflected on his economic status. But, Mother began teaching in 1907, in the fall of 1907, and she married in December 1911. They were planning to be married later, but -- I'm telling you this because Mother might not remember all these things that she'd told me. Father, after he finished his internship, had a position at University of Wisconsin in medicine, and he --
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Anderson: On the faculty?

Leopold: No, he was with the medical department but not on the faculty.
271 He wrote her and said, "Let's get married at Christmas. I'll get off then, and I don't know when I can get off again." So Mother went to her father and he went -- go ahead and tell it. Do you want to tell it?

Isabelle: The superintendent said, "When a girl has a chance to get married, I never interfere."

Anderson: But he wouldn't let you keep teaching.

Isabelle: Oh, he said, "No, you go on, get married." And I always felt I did the wrong thing because the boy -- the teacher that came in didn't know much about what he was teaching. But I did it anyhow. Then we went up to Wisconsin and I met a wife of another doctor, and we became very good friends, and we'd go to the university. They wouldn't charge us, but they didn't give us any credit. But I enjoyed those courses in different languages.
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Leopold: Can I offer you some tea or coffee?

Anderson: Oh, no thank you, sir. I'm just thoroughly enjoying this.

Isabelle: Would you have something?

Anderson: Oh, no, thank you, ma'am, no, thank you. So you and your husband lived in Wisconsin for awhile?

Isabelle: Oh, yes.

Anderson: How long did you live in Wisconsin?

Isabelle: Do you remember, did I ever tell you?

Leopold: Yes, you've told me. You went up there in -- well, after your honeymoon, you went up there in January 1912, and you stayed there all through that winter and all through the following academic year. I think you came south in the summer, June, or something like that of 1913, because my mother's father wanted to keep his family together. And he persuaded Father that there would be a good practice in Chattanooga, and he came down here. He did have a good practice.
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Isabelle: He said, my husband said, "I don't know, I would go to Memphis," but he came right here because my father liked it. As my son said, we came here and located.

Anderson: Where did you live when you first came back to Chattanooga?

Isabelle: Where did we live?

Leopold: I think the first place you went was to your old house at
302 Fourth and Cherry; then you found a place to live out in Highland Park. But where, I don't know exactly.

Isabelle: Oh, yes.

Leopold: Do you know where Highland Park is? Do you know where Highland Park Avenue is? Have you been here long?

Anderson: Three years.

Leopold: Well, Highland Park Avenue, it's east of the railroad tracks running at right angles to McCallie Avenue and Bailey Avenue. But I don't know exactly what street they lived on.

Isabelle: I lived in Highland Park?

Leopold: Yes, but I don't know where you-all lived [409 Chamberlain Avenue], do you?

Isabelle: No, I don't; I can't remember.

Anderson: Did your husband start his medical practice then when you came back?

Isabelle: Yes, right here. And there was a Dr. [George R., Sr.] West. My husband was very quiet and he would have just sat and waited. This Dr. West also was a graduate of the same medical school, and he invited my husband to come in to his office, and he gave him a room. And then he'd send patients in there, and that's the way his practice grew, because they knew him after awhile. My husband was a very sincere man, and he -- really, money never did bother him as long as we had something to live on. He was very nice, this Dr. West was. So that's how he got practice. And then when the summer came it was so hot, we'd come up on the mountain. But after I had a baby it was too much trouble to pack and go up and down, so we just came up and stayed.

Anderson: Oh, you mean you used to come up on the mountain just in the summertime?

Isabelle: In the summer.

Anderson: You had a summer house?

Leopold: They did that in those days.
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Isabelle: Yes, we'd go back. But after I said, "I can't do this every summer," and we moved up and stayed. There was a little hotel up here when we first came, and we'd go to that hotel. I don't remember the name of it. Do you?

Leopold: Well, I don't remember which one, which hotel you mean.

Isabelle: That little hotel that we came up in the summer.

Leopold: Well, Mrs. [Cornelia] Eagar had a boarding house over --
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Isabelle: I don't think it's up here any more.

Leopold: Mrs. Eagar had a boarding house up here. Mrs. Eagar, and that was over on Laurel Lane, and that was where you took me after I was born. I was born at an old hospital down -- the West-Ellis Hospital on Ninth, [612] West Ninth, and Dr. West, * that's who was -- and my father knew one of the founders.

Isabelle: Oh, you were born in the hospital.

Leopold: Yes.

Isabelle: That's right, I remember.

Anderson: How did you use to get up on top of the mountain? Was there -- did you have cars or was there --

Isabelle: We came here in -- I guess we drove up. But at first, you know, there was the [Lookout Mountain] Incline, but I don't think we came up on the Incline. I think we drove up.
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Anderson: Do you remember anything about your husband's medical practice? For example, in 1918 was the great flu epidemic, was he --

Isabelle: Do I remember anything about it?

Anderson: Yes.

Isabelle: Well, what is it you want to know?

Anderson: Well, the flu epidemic in 1918 that killed so many people.

Isabelle: Oh, oh, I know that they wanted him to go on the mountain and be the doctor. He said, "No," he wouldn't do that, he
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* Dr. West and Dr. G. Manning Ellis opened West-Ellis Hospital in 1902.

- (Isabelle): would go to anybody, but they'd have to be individuals. And he did, and as I said he didn't care whether -- he didn't have much money, but it didn't bother him. If people wanted to pay they paid; if they didn't, they didn't.
- Leopold: That's true. He never went to law to collect a debt.
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- Anderson: Did they sometimes pay their bills with food or vegetables from the garden, things like that?
- Isabelle: I don't know whether they did that or not, they might have.
- Leopold: Not in Chattanooga.
- Anderson: Not in Chattanooga.
- Isabelle: Sometimes said they'd send him the money, he didn't care. He'd go out at night if they'd call him. And if they didn't pay him, didn't bother him either. Not that he had so much, but he just didn't -- money didn't bother him. I think that's wonderful. (laughter) It bothers most people.
- Anderson: Most people, it surely does.
- Leopold: He was able to build this house [510 E. Brow Road, Lookout Mountain].
- Isabelle: Oh, yes, yes.
- Leopold: And he was not poor.
- Isabelle: Yes, and the man kept adding ornamental things, you see, and he said, "Now, I'm going to pay you for what you've done. If you keep on putting on new things I'm not going to pay any-more." And he paid for -- see how those doors are made, see. How fancy.
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- Leopold: William Crutchfield designed this house. You may have heard of him, who died about twenty-five or so years ago, William Crutchfield. He is related to the Crutchfields downtown, who are down there now, but how I don't know. And he was also distantly related to Mother's family.
- Isabelle: Yes, he was.
- Leopold: But he designed this house, he was a young man, and he kept adding on fancy things, as Mother said, and finally when Father remonstrated with him on that, why, he said, "If it goes over a certain price, into the building, I won't charge you for drawing the plans," and it did go over that price and he didn't charge for them.
381

Isabelle: That man wanted to put covers over those. He said, "I'm not
387 going to pay for anymore, I can't pay. Now, if you do it,
you do it on your own."

Anderson: What did downtown Chattanooga look like back in those days?
Were there still horses and wagons?

Isabelle: Yes, it was a little town. Children used to run down -- when
I was a child we'd run down. We'd see my father coming home,
we'd all run out and meet him, and then go and get his slip-
pers. (laughter) Wanted to be the ones to put [them] on.
And on Saturdays was the big day -- they worked, had the shoe
store open at night. And my brother had a little garden.
Did I tell you that we saw the first automobiles. My mother
called me out one day, she said, "Come on and see these bug-
gies going up the hill without anything[?]," and we all ran
out. And the wife, what's her name? Mrs. ?

Leopold: President [William] and Mrs. [Ida Saxon] McKinley came to
408 Chattanooga.

Isabelle: McKinley, she waved to all of us on our side porch -- just to
wave -- so we could see that car going up the hill.

Anderson: And that was the first car in Chattanooga?

Isabelle: Yes.

Leopold: She remembered that. But their house was on Fourth and Cherry,
and the motorcade, the presidential motorcade, went up Fourth
Street.* And there was -- they had a little side porch and
she went out.

Anderson: Waved at the president's wife.

Isabelle: Waved and she waved back to us. And then once a friend, who
could afford to buy -- came and took me out for a little ride
up around, just to let me see what it felt [like].

Leopold: Mother remembers that she told me that when she was a little
419 girl she had to be taken to New York for a -- to have her
tonsils taken out.

* The only reference found of William McKinley visiting
Chattanooga was in 1895 when, as governor of Ohio, he came to
the dedication of the Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military
Park. This visit is possibly too early for the above
episode.

- Isabelle: Operation on my throat.
- Leopold: But now they teased her up there about how small Chattanooga was, and she said, "Chattanooga may be small, but at least we have electric streetcars and you just still have horse-drawn streetcars in New York." (laughter)
- 425
- Isabelle: They laughed, they thought it was real cute -- I lived up there with them for about four months, and I remember going driving and --
- Leopold: Will you excuse me for just a minute. I have to make a phone call.
- Isabelle: I remember when I left some of the doctors gave me a box of candy.
- Anderson: This when you left New York?
- Isabelle: When I left New York. And I didn't think so much of it at the time, but when I thought back afterwards, I said, "How lovely." And I stayed with cousins -- did I tell you their names -- Cousin Rose Charles and Cousin Bertha. But Cousin Rose was the one that I really -- and I think we met them by -- my mother and father took me -- after I got back, they were afraid to leave me at home, you know, so they took me. And they took me to the first World's Fair. That was in Chicago, I think it was.* What's the matter?
- 435
- Anderson: I'm just making sure it's running. So you remember the first -- you remember the streetcars in Chattanooga?
- Isabelle: Yes, I remember.
- Anderson: The streetcars? Do you remember the horses and buggies, too? Did you have a horse and buggy when you were a little girl?
- Isabelle: Yes. And I remember a car we had with a little box seat, and my sister, I guess, anyhow she sat up on that little -- When you've lived a century, nearly, you remember lots.
- 452
- Anderson: Lots of things, you've seen a lot of change.
- Isabelle: Yes, lots.

* Chicago, Illinois, was host to the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, a celebration of the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' discovery of America.

Anderson: Do you remember movie theaters when they first came to Chattanooga? Movie theaters?
457

Isabelle: Theaters? Did we have movies in those days?

Anderson: Well, probably not that early. How about opera houses and opera, did you have those?

Isabelle: Yes, and I remember one time my mother taking me, and she was laughing at a joke, and I didn't know what -- let me see, if I can remember -- and I didn't know what in the world she was laughing at. But I was trying to -- I used to remember what the joke was.

Anderson: Did you go to the opera with your mother and dad then, your mother and father?

Isabelle: I went there in the afternoon. If she couldn't take me, and -- I've forgotten a lot of stuff. When you talk about it, it sort of brings it back.

Anderson: Do you remember the names of any of the theaters in town? The Bijou, for example, was one of them I think.

Isabelle: The name of the theater?

Anderson: Yes.

Isabelle: It was just the theater, it was the only one. I don't know, 477
may have had a name that I don't recall. I think we just called it the Opera House. You know, Chattanooga was a little town.

Anderson: Do you remember much about the railroad? Was the railroad pretty important back in those days?

Isabelle: The railroad?

Anderson: Yes, do you remember much about that? Did you take train trips in those days?

Isabelle: My son will tell you about his love -- and he loved to ride 487
on the train, and his father taking him up in the -- asking permission and taking him up into the engine so he could see. I wish he were here to tell you about that. He loved it! And to this day he loves riding on a train. Oftentimes I have flown to meetings because I didn't want to spend those days on that train. Well, I wish I could tell you more about it.

[Editor: Portions of the interview in this section have been omitted because the interviewee was having difficulty hearing and her son had left the room.]

Anderson: Were there dances here that you went to in Chattanooga? Did you go to dances in Chattanooga?
524

Isabelle: Oh, yes, I did, I remember -- I can't recall her name now -- oh, yes, I loved dancing, I always did, loved it till I got so old I can't. I loved it. And I remember my daughter loved it. She was older, she'd get up and go around dancing in the Read House one time, my daughter. She's now -- my daughter's now a grandmother. But at that time she just loved it. And they used to have at the Read House, not just one man playing the piano, but they had, oh, several, you know. And they were amused by her getting up and dancing, and they kept on. (laughter) Her older sister was embarrassed that her family would act like that.
547

Anderson: Do you remember World War I? Did World War I affect Chattanooga at all? The war?

Isabelle: I don't think so. How old was I?

Anderson: Oh, you were probably about 20 or 25 then.

Isabelle: Oh, I guess I would remember, I do recall, yes. Oh, yes, of course.

Anderson: The boys all went off to France.

Isabelle: Yes, yes.

Anderson: Do you remember very many boys from Chattanooga going off to France to fight?

Isabelle: Oh, yes. Yes, I did remember. I remember there, I wish he'd come, he'd help me recall. But I did remember, yes I did, World War, and there were some of them that didn't get back.
562

Anderson: Did you know any of those boys?

Isabelle: I think, I probably did, but I can't recall. I wish my memory was better.

Anderson: Oh, your memory's fine.

Isabelle: Considering --

Anderson: Your memory is just fine. How about the Depression, the
571 Great Depression?

Isabelle: Oh, that was bad. I do remember that we couldn't afford cer-
tain things, yes, I remember that.

Anderson: Did you have a tough time yourself?

Isabelle: Yes, yes, of course. We were supposed to anyhow, and did
what we could. Yes, we were supposed to do that.

Anderson: Do you remember anything special about the Depression? Your
husband was a doctor, so he was able to work, at least?

Isabelle: Let me see. I declare, I'm sorry. I knew I couldn't keep
recalling. He'll come back, you ask that question again. We
were supposed to give, you know, and to help those that didn't
have. When he comes back, you ask me again.

Anderson: What was your wedding like? When you got married to Dr. Shu-
596 macker, what kind of wedding did you have?

Isabelle: I was married and I -- we were married in a home. Son, was I
married in a home?

Leopold: In your home, yes.

Isabelle: That's what I thought. You ask him some of the questions.
He'll help me remember. Son, you answer.

Anderson: I was asking your mom what her wedding was like.

Leopold: It was just a family wedding. It was just in the living room,
612 I remember that, of the old house at Fourth and Cherry. It
stood until -- oh, in the thirties, when I was 20 years old
or so. In the wedding, the wedding itself, it was just a
family wedding. But one of my mother's father's sisters and
her husband were late getting there. And Aunt Annie says,
"Well, they can't have the wedding without us," but they did.
Mother was the bride, she said, "Close the doors at the exact
time," and they did, and the wedding proceeded. And then they
were -- they didn't like it at all. (laughter) They turned
around and went home, I guess. But that happened.

Isabelle: You asked me some other questions.

Anderson: I was asking your mother if she remembers any of the flooding
624 that was so common back in those days.

Leopold: There was a flood in 1911*, I remember reading. But I don't
know, she may have, she should remember. There were floods,
the river came up and flooded Market Street one time.

Isabelle: I don't remember that; I remember it, or I just remember peo-
ple telling me, I don't know.

Leopold: And in the flu epidemic that you were talking about.

Isabelle: Oh, yes.

Leopold: That was in 1918 and '19, and Mother herself -- my father was
in the army as a medical officer, and he was at that time sta-
tioned at Prescott, Arizona, and Mother had the flu and pneu-
monia out there.

Anderson: Oh, you were out in Arizona with your husband then.

Isabelle: Yes.

Leopold: During the war, that part of the war. And it was after the
640 war was over that was the worst part of the epidemic. And
Father did not have the flu, but Mother had it and I had it,
and Mother's sister [Lillie Schwartz] who was with us helping
take care of me.

End Tape 1, Side 1
Begin Tape 1, Side 2

Isabelle: He belonged to her, she took care of him because I had a baby,
007 and I think -- I guess you thought as much of her as you did
of me, or maybe more.

Leopold: Not quite.

Anderson: But you were in Arizona during 1918 when the flu epidemic was
so bad, you weren't -- When did you get back to Chattanooga
after the war?

Leopold: In the spring of 1919.

Anderson: Oh, pretty quick then.

* No reference was found to a 1911 flood; however, there
was a major flood in 1917.

- Leopold: 014 Yes, and moved back to Lookout Mountain. My father was from out of town, but he loved Lookout Mountain, and as soon as he saw it he wanted to move up there. At first they rented up here, and then they built this house in '21. I remember moving in here.
- Anderson: Oh.
- Leopold: Well, of course, it was only sixty-four years ago. So they, oh, yes, they -- and I remember living in that other house on the mountain.
- Isabelle: Do you remember?
- Leopold: 022 Yes, I remember the Temple house. Oh, it was Summerfield [Key "Skey"] Johnston -- it's across from him. The man that owned that was Captain [Henry F.] Temple. He fought in the Civil War on the northern side, and he -- but after the war was over -- he liked this area, too -- everybody seems to like Lookout Mountain -- and he built that house where Skey Johnston lives now [214 W. Brow Road], and he owned that house across the street from it, which is still there, big wooden columns on the front [211 W. Brow Road]. Mrs. G. I. [Isaac] Phillips lived there for awhile -- I don't know, do you -- you probably don't know her.
- Anderson: No, sir.
- Leopold: But, anyway, I remember living there; my sister was born in that house.
- Anderson: I was asking about the Depression and how the Depression affected Chattanooga. And your mother seemed to remember some of that quite well.
- Leopold: 034 Especially that it was bad here. But I tell you, although I lived here the middle of the Depression, a child, if its parents are not poor -- I can't say we were affluent, but we were not poor at all and we had this house; my father's income was very low during the Depression. But I never felt deprived of anything. But I'll tell you one thing, he sent me off to college and it was in '33, I was seventeen. He gave me \$50.00 worth of half-dollar pieces, that was silver money; in case the currency collapsed I would have some silver. And I kept that till the end of my college days and turned it in to the bank. That was the only indication I had of the Depression. Father never liked to talk about money, he never would. He thought it was --
- Isabelle: Money didn't bother him.

Leopold: Well, it bothered him if he didn't have it. But he would never pursue it, he was not an avid pursuer of money, and he thought it was bad taste to talk about money; he never would talk about his own money or anybody else's. He had a car, he had a house, and he was able to send my sister and me to private schools and to college. So we were -- in those days that didn't entail the proportion of somebody's income that it does now.

043

I went to Baylor, and when I went to Baylor it was \$100 or maybe \$200 a year for the tuition. I took a visitor, a friend of ours visiting here, over to Baylor some years ago to show him the big campus and all, and I asked a young teacher out there what it cost. And I don't know, it was \$1,000 a year, something like that, tremendous lot. But it's much more now. I couldn't resist saying, "That's terrible," and he didn't like it much.

Isabelle: I'll tell you another thing, they all sang so loud, all those boys in that car that went down. They sang all the way over there to Baylor.

Leopold: That was a streetcar.

Isabelle: Streetcar, yes, they sang songs.

Anderson: Oh, you mean you used to go to school by streetcar.

Leopold: My father would take me downtown, and there was a streetcar line that went from Chattanooga to the top of Signal Mountain, and another branch went to Red Bank. The one that went to Signal Mountain passed near Baylor School. You can still see some signs of the track out there, and he -- we used to get on the streetcar, it had a door in the middle instead of at the end -- that was my father -- and the boys -- there was sort of a bay window at the back, and the boys would get around there and sing. Have you ever heard the song "Hand Me Down"?

056

Isabelle: Did I show you that? [shows photo of her husband]

Anderson: Oh, isn't he nice looking.

Isabelle: These people had been so nice to him that he said he'd like to do something, and they wouldn't let anybody go in there without a card. He had to pin that on. But they wanted him.

Leopold: It was Z. C. [Zeboim Cartter] Patten who helped Father get started in medical practice in Chattanooga. Have you heard of Z. C. Patten?

066

Anderson: Oh, yes.

Leopold: He owned what is now called Chatterm [Drug & Chemical Company], but it was the Chattanooga Medicine Company, patent medicine and not what a doctor would ordinarily want to be associated with. But he was kind enough to -- when Father was poor and getting a start -- [give him] a part-time job examining employees at the plant down here in St. Elmo when -- during
071 their noon hour if they had any complaints at all, they'd just come to Father, and he would patch them up.

Anderson: What do you mean by patent medicine?

Leopold: Patent medicine, Cardui, anything that was -- you've heard of Carter's Little Liver Pills and all kinds -- those are patent medicines, they are not prescribed, they are not truly medicines at all.

Isabelle: My husband wasn't a surgeon at all, he was internal medicine.

Leopold: And so Father would go out there and they would pay him some, and it did help. Later on he didn't need that, of course, but he was loyal to them and he thought he would continue doing that, out of loyalty to Mr. Patten. The Guerrys own it; Dr. [Alexander F.] Guerry married one of the Patten girls
080 [Charlotte Holmes Patten]. He was head of the university, you know.

Anderson: Chemistry, I think.

Leopold: No, he was the head of the university, he was the president of the University of Chattanooga [1929-1938] when it was that. Before that, he was the headmaster at Baylor, and after that he was the vice-chancellor or chancellor over at Sewanee.* But he -- you have heard of him, Dr. Guerry, I guess.

Anderson: Oh, yes.

Leopold: He married a Patten, and his boys [Alexander, Jr., and John P. Guerry] now run that company; it was transmitted in that way.

Anderson: Was your husband associated with Erlanger Hospital when it
088 first started?

Isabelle: Yes, yes.

* Dr. Guerry served as vice-chancellor of the University of the South from 1938 until his death in 1948.

Leopold: I don't know when it first started. But he was on the staff of Erlanger, and also with West-Ellis, and I don't -- when Memorial Hospital started -- well, it was in existence before Father died, oh, yes.

Anderson: 1958, I think, Memorial Hospital [opened in 1952] --

Leopold: Yes, he died in '62, so it had just --
091

Isabelle: I'm glad you told me; if anybody else asks me I'll --

Leopold: What's that, Mother?

Isabelle: When he died, what year was it?

Leopold: 1962.

Anderson: Do you have any stories about your husband that are interesting?

Leopold: Interesting stories.

Isabelle: About Father: I don't remember any, especially, now, I just know that -- about Dr. West taking him in, I told you that. And I don't -- do I know anything else?

Leopold: About his medical practice, you mean? I can tell you one little thing.

Isabelle: If people met him out, he'd ask somebody if they could come meet him and see him, and he would go. And when they would get ready to pay, they would have a bill and ask him if he'd change it, you know, and he'd say, "No, I can't." They'd say, "Well, I'll send it." But they never did.
101

Anderson: Never got it.

Isabelle: It didn't bother him, either.

Leopold: He would always take a night call, always go out at night. Many a time the phone would ring at two in the morning: "Doctor, I've been feeling so bad all day, but now I feel worse." So they'd call at two in the morning. And they would always call him asking telephone advice at dinner time, because they said, "Doctor, we know you're at home then." And I couldn't stand it.

Isabelle: That discouraged him [Leopold, Jr.]; he said he wouldn't be a doctor.

Leopold: Oh, I wouldn't have been a good doctor anyway. But he would never discourage it; he got mad and showed it to us, but he wouldn't show it to the patients. They saw a quite different side of Father. None of his patients ever knew that my father had a bad temper, for example. (laughter) But he would -- I tried to persuade him not to answer the phone, not to go to the phone when he was at dinner, but he wouldn't listen. He always went to the phone when they called him.

Isabelle: Well, they put it on the table, didn't they, beside him?

Leopold: No, no, he came -- I mean here, it was all -- he sat in the chair there.

Isabelle: Didn't have the telephone, put it --

Leopold: No, the cord wasn't that long; he had to come in here. And the patients would call and talk to him for a long time, and he was just as sweet and patient with them.

Anderson: A lot of free medical advice over the phone.

Isabelle: And that's why he said he wouldn't be a doctor.

Leopold: Oh, I couldn't have stood that.

Isabelle: And my husband said he wished he had told him -- writing the history of it -- that would have been something -- of medicine.
123

Anderson: History of medicine, yes.

Isabelle: Yes, but he didn't think about it at that time.

Anderson: Well, I can't think of any more questions right now. It's been really very interesting.

Leopold: One time there was a fellow up here, had been the postmaster, his name was John [D. M.] Marshall, and he called Father over to his house. He had sat down on a pair of scissors and hurt himself badly, and Father had to go out there and take stitches in him. He came back and he says to Mother, "I don't see how anybody could be so silly as to sit down on a pair of scissors," and he flopped down on a chair there, and there was a pair of scissors there (laughter) and he did the same identical thing. (laughter)

Isabelle: Oh, my.

Anderson: Mr. Shumacker, for the tape, I don't believe I have your first name and I probably should.

Leopold: Leopold, L-E-O-P-O-L-D, the same as my father's.

Anderson: Oh, okay, just like your father's, all right.

Isabelle: Oh, yes.

Anderson: Well, you've lived a long, interesting life, Mrs. Shumacker.
137 You've lived a long, interesting life in Chattanooga. You've seen a lot of Chattanooga history.

Leopold: You've lived a long, interesting life, he said.

Isabelle: Oh, yes. Well, I tried to tell him about the little box seat where Jane sat.

Leopold: Oh, that was an old car, they don't make that. It was a Franklin and they had what they call a victoria model where that -- in the back seat had room for two people, and had a little box standing up above the seat for storage. You know, you'd put anything in there. And my poor little sister had to sit on that when they were out driving. (laughter)

Anderson: I was asking your mother when the first theaters came into town. She said she remembers going to the opera with her mother.

Leopold: They always had theaters in Chattanooga as long as she remembers. Movies came in much later because they came in in the
145 early years of this century I believe.

Anderson: Yes, I would think.

Isabelle: You said you were born here?

Anderson: No, I'm from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Leopold: Milwaukee, are you?

Anderson: Milwaukee, yes, sir.

Isabelle: Huh?

Leopold: Says he's from Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Isabelle: Oh, you did tell me that, yes. I forgot.

Anderson: Do you remember when electricity first came to Chattanooga?
151

Isabelle: Electricity?

Anderson: Yes.

Isabelle: I do seem to --

Leopold: You remember when they had gas lights here.

Isabelle: Oh, yes.

Leopold: And Aunt Cecile would go around and light the lamps and Uncle Herman [Schwartz] would go around behind her and turn them
154 off, to tease her.

Isabelle: Are you telling about Herman?

Leopold: Yes.

Isabelle: He'd come right behind and have more fun just turning them off, and she'd get perfectly furious, and that's just when they'd go off.

Anderson: Because he was turning off the gas lights. (laughter)

Leopold: And she remembers the first telephone.

Isabelle: Oh, yes, and we had a little footstool; of course, it just
160 was in the wall, and I'd get up on that, and my father was very nice, very patient. I just had to say, "Hello," I had to say something over that telephone.

Leopold: She'd call him down at his business.

Anderson: Oh, at his office.

Isabelle: Very nice.

Anderson: Okay.

Isabelle: Very nice.

End Tape 1, Side 2
END OF INTERVIEW

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