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IB: Testing one, two, three. This is February 19, 1992, interviewing Doris Dow at the R.E. Olds Museum.

IA: I guess the first thing we could start with is just some, you know, basic information about what your address is and where you were born and things like that.

Dow: Okay. My name is Doris Dow and I live at 819 Moores River Drive, Lansing and I worked at the REO for 25 years.

IA: Wow.

Dow: As a secretary.

IA: When did you start?

Dow: Oh, God, I knew you was gonna answer me that, 25 years from, I was gonna look that up, 25 years from...

IB: When did you retire?

Dow: Well, we went out in '75.

IB: Oh, so you were right there till the end?

Dow: Oh, yes, yeah.

IB: Okay, we can...

Dow: I think it was...

IA: So 1950.

Dow: 1950, okay, yeah, 1950.

IA: Okay, did you start right out of school at the REO?

Dow: No, no, I was working, I had a dress store in Flint and my mother was living alone and she was, my brothers were in the service at the time, back during the War, my brothers were in the service and my mother was alone so she said, well, why don't you come to Lansing and I said, oh, I just started a new business in Flint, a new, which they had sent me to New York to train as a manager for a dress, this dress store and I had...

IA: Wow!

Dow: And I had, yes, it was, it was real nice and I said, oh, my God, what am I gonna do, you know. But I felt that she was alone, you know, and...

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IB: And you were born in Lansing ..... from Lansing.

Dow: And I was born in, yes, and there was nobody over in Flint that, other than friends so I went over to, came to Lansing, went over to personnel and talked to people that I knew over there in personnel and I ended up going to work in the blueprint room at REO.

IA: As a secretary?

Dow: No, no, I worked as a blueprint operator. It was a huge machine that ran copies, I should say, ran copies of blueprints. It was called a ozalid machine.

IA: Oh, I never heard of this.

Dow: Hadn't ya?

IB: A what machine?

Dow: It was called ozalid machine, it was...

IB: .....

Dow: Ozalid, O Z A L I D.

IB: Okay.

Dow: Yeah, it's a big machine that you put, oh, like a negative in...

IA: Blue paper, the paper that...

Dow: Well, no, that's the print that come out, that blue paper...

IA: That comes out, oh, I see.

Dow: That comes out but you have what we call tracings. They're tracings of different parts of the trucks and pictures of the trucks and like the engineers draw up in engineering. It's different parts and things like that and for some reason or other, maybe they would have a request in purchasing department to send out to the vendors, they had to have a print of that part that they were ordering or, so the purchasing agents would call for a copy of such and such a print which was all numbered. They were all numbered and they could look in their ledgers and find out what part that they wanted to order.

IA: And then you'd get to work?

Dow: And, well, and then we would go to the vault, what we called the vault and get the tracing, run off as many copies as what this purchasing agent needed and send it to him through the mail. Or a

lot of times it was prints that were ordered through the foremens out in the factory. Maybe they were having problems putting the truck together...

IA: And they needed to get another look.

Dow: And they needed to get another look and maybe the dimensions were wrong or maybe they'd have a big gap of two inches and they're only suppose to have, what was it, an eighth of an inch or something like that and they'd have to send, they'd get all these blueprints out, look at 'em and see what was wrong, you know, why weren't they fitting together. So, and I stayed in there for, I don't know, probably five years.

IA: How long did it take you to learn the job?

Dow: Oh, that's no problem.

IA: No problem at all?

Dow: No problem learning the job.

IA: Just real quick?

Dow: Yeah, ah, huh.

IA: And was it mostly girls working there in that shop, in that part of the shop?

Dow: Ah, well, there was three of us, three girls as I remember at that time and one fellow working.

IA: Oh, doing the same thing?

Dow: No, we all had individual jobs.

IA: Different things to do.

Dow: Different things but, well....

IA: .....

Dow: ..... the same department.

IA: I see.

Dow: And it was real interesting when I think back on it now, it was real interesting, more interesting than what I thought at the time, you know. I thought at the time it was very boring.

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IA: Did they put you in there because of your experience with the, with dressmaking?

Dow: No, no.

IA: The pattern like the blueprints?

Dow: No, no, there was just an opening.

IA: I see.

Dow: That was where the opening was.

IA: 'Cause there is sort of a connection between them, a little bit.

Dow: Yeah, well...

IB: I was thinking the same thing.

Dow: Well, no, no.

IB: It wasn't that, it just happened that this was where the...

Dow: That was, that was, that's where the opening was at the time that I went to work there.

IA: Okay.

IB: How did you happen to go to REO, because you had friends that worked there?

Dow: My mother worked there.

IA: Your mother worked at REO?

Dow: My mother worked at REO.

IB: What did she do there?

Dow: She was a, at that, well, she was a controm.... operator at that time.

IA: Oh, that's wonderful.

Dow: Yeah, and so...

IB: Forerunner of punchcard.

IA: That's right. That's right, early computers.

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Dow: Yeah, um, hum, and, yeah, she worked there. She worked there a number of years, too. In fact, several in our family has worked there. My stepfather worked there. My brother, two of my brothers worked there and I worked there. My husband was there.

IB: A REO family.

Dow: Yes. REO is known for being a family orinated place.

IA: Right.

Dow: Yeah, if you worked there, your mother worked there, usually your sons, daughters, brothers, sisters...

IA: Why would you think, why would you say that was? Was it about, something about the company or the people who worked there or 'cause obviously it's not true for all the other different companies. Something special about REO.

Dow: The people that worked for REO really liked and enjoyed their jobs, I think most of 'em. They all complained, we all complained but I really think the people that worked there enjoyed their job or enjoyed other, the other people that worked there and so they enjoyed their, then and so they wanted their sons there. It was just one of those things that their sons, their daughters were there. Just like my mother worked there so she said, well, it's a good place to work, you know. Why don't you, why don't you come there and see if you can get a job there and I just never, never gave it another thought. If I could get to work there, well, that was better. My mother worked there, you know.

IB: And the pay was...

Dow: The pay was basically the same as it was, or better, better, certainly better than working in a store downtown and at that time, Oldsmobile had its own group of people, you know, they had...

IA: Their own family.

Dow: They had their own families working there but if you had a choice of working between Oldsmobile and REO and your mother worked or your father or one thing another worked at REO, that's where you're gonna go.

IA: Sure.

Dow: We felt more comfortable and I enjoyed working there at the time. I enjoyed the people that worked there.

IB: How long did you stay in the blueprint department?

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Dow: I would say about five years, I stayed there and then, let's see, did they consolidate at that time. I don't know how my boss, I worked for Mr. Turner, Ralph Turner at that time. Mr. Turner has now passed away, but there was an opening, well, that was called, this was all in engineering. I worked, my whole time was in engineering...

IA: In engineering?

Dow: Yes. Blueprint was in engineering but there was an opening in specifications for a secretary at that time there and so he asked me if I would like to transfer over to there which was in the next department.

IA: Had you gone to business school?

Dow: Yes, I had...

IA: You did?

Dow: Yes, I had been to business school, yeah.

IA: So you learned shorthand and typing...

Dow: Yes, shorthand and typing, yes.

IB: Here in Lansing?

Dow: Yes, ah, huh.

IB: Where, Acme Business College?

Dow: Acme Business College, yes.

IA: Did you go right out of high school?

Dow: Right out of high school, yes. So I said, you know, I mean, that was more in my line and one thing another so I went in there and that's where I was for the next 20 years, was in specifications...

IA: Oh, you were there in specifications?

Dow: Yeah, I stayed right in specifications for the next 20 years.

IB: So it must have been a good association and you liked being in that...

Dow: Yes, yeah, ah, huh.

IA: Did you work for one person or did you work for...

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Dow: Oh, no, we had several, several different .....

IA: No, what I meant was, you had a boss that you answered to or were you the secretary for lots of different bosses?

Dow: I had, for just one at a time.

IA: You were just one...

Dow: Just one.

IA: The personal secretary for one...

Dow: For one person, yes.

IA: man. But that changed over the years.

Dow: Yeah, that position changed over a number, over the years.

IA: I see, 'cause sometimes secretaries, you know, work in an office and they have lots of people, like in my department, you know...

Dow: Yeah, we didn't have that. We didn't have that.

IA: It was a personal secretary.

Dow: We didn't have that at REO, a secretarial pool. We didn't have a secretarial pool.

IA: You didn't have that?

Dow: No. Everybody, all the secretaries worked for just one, one boss at the time. We never had a secretarial pool.

IB: Who were some of the men that you worked for, assuming they never, really didn't have executive positions for...

Dow: No, we didn't have women at that time. Oh, my gosh, let's see. I worked for Ralph Turner and from Ralph Turner I went to, hum, I may not have this in the right order.

IB: Well, that's alright.

Dow: Probably Stan Draminski, Bill Earl, Henry Coleman and I think that was, I think Henry was the last one, yeah. Yup, he was the last one. But it was in specifications.

IA: So you learned a lot about that.

Dow: Oh, yes...

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IA: ..... being there 20 years.

Dow: Oh, yes, yes. God forbid anybody to have to step in, you know, and try to learn our procedures 'cause we changed procedures several different times over those years. I always, when I had to break anybody in which I had girls underneath me, see, when we started out, when we started out we were not union and I'm not sure...

IA: The secretaries?

Dow: No, the office was not union at one time but when the union came in and I can't tell you what year that was that the union came in, we were all put into the union.

IA: Which union? Was it the UAW?

Dow: No. It wasn't that, it wasn't, well, yes, it was the UAW but...

IB: It wasn't the same thing that the people down in the shop had?

Dow: No.

IA: It was a separate office workers...

Dow: It was a separate office, it was a separate office, just for officer workers alone.

IB: White collar...

IA: Office or professional workers?

Dow: Yes, ah, huh, but now the secretary, the grade of secretary that I was in at that time, I was, I was under the union.

IA: So you weren't super, you weren't considered administration?

Dow: I wasn't as, no, I wasn't administration because there were other secretaries that were higher and worked for higher bosses, one thing another, that were not union.

IB: Oh, okay.

Dow: So some of us was and some of us weren't, depending upon, you might say, more or less, who you worked for.

IA: Yeah.

Dow: Yeah.

IB: Was it better to be with the union, protected your rights more?



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Dow: Protect, the union protected our rights, yeah.

IB: So they took...

Dow: Yes, and then we were graded one, two, three and four, four was the highest grade that we could go and usually a grade four had people underneath them, like I had one, two, three, four girls underneath me I supervised or, not exactly supervised but did their...

IB: Assigned the work?

Dow: Assigned work to them, you know. So it was different.

IA: The union never went out on strike:

Dow: No, no.

IA: There wasn't a strike?

Dow: Not at the time that I was there. They did at one time, yes, but not, not, yes, one time they, I think they went out on strike but that wasn't during my time.

IA: Maybe when they were just getting in?

IB: That might have been the late '40s.

Dow: I'm not exactly sure just when but I'm sure, if it didn't go out on strike, they came very, very close to it.

IA: Okay, when they were probably negotiating a contract.

Dow: It might, yes, yeah, um, hum but ordinary...

IA: There was never question, any question in our mind that the union was a good thing and...

Dow: No, no. The union was good. The union was good to us and that partly was due to our manager at the time, too. He was, he was, our manager, well, we had several different managers, boy. We had such change of personnel, of course, we were bought and sold so many different times and whenever time we were bought and sold, this was towards the last 10 years, I would say, our last 10 years, we were bought and sold so many different times that we couldn't keep up with the letterhead...

IA: Oh, my.

Dow: on our stationary and we, half the time we didn't know who our bosses were or if they were...

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IA: So the union was the source of continuity, almost 'cause at least that stayed the same?

Dow: Yes, at least that stayed the same, yes.

IA: And you had some security?

Dow: Yes, yeah...

IB: That must have been very difficult to keep trying to work around a new person, learn a new routine.

Dow: Oh, it was. It was...

IB: Keep ya all in turmoil.

Dow: Yes, yes. It was, it was quite, because a lot of times, I can remember a couple times working for, typing up a letter for one boss and sending it out and at the same time, the next day typing up another letter for almost counterdicting what I said in the first letter. So, you never, you never knew. You just, you just did what you was told.

IA: Yeah.

Dow: At the time 'cause you didn't know, as I say, we changed companies so many, so fast and furious there for a while.

IA: Through the '60s?

Dow: Yes.

IB: Now, you said your husband worked there, too.

Dow: My husband was a welder out in the factory.

IB: Oh, he was a welder/

Dow: Yes, um, hum.

IB: Did you meet him because you met him at REO or...

Dow: No, no, I, I met him through some friends and he was working on a different job and he got laid off from that job and he was gonna draw unemployment and I couldn't see that. You're not gonna lay around the house while I get up and work, go to work every morning. You're going to work so I called the personnel manager at that time there and I said, my husband's home. He's not workin'. I don't feel like gettin' up and going, coming to work in the morning and him stayin' home doing nothing. He said, send him in.

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IA: Ohhhhh.

Dow: And I called him up and I said you meet, and I can't remember that personnel manager's name, there was another change. We were constantly changed over there. God, I can't remember what that man's name was...

IA: Now when was this, in the '50s sometime when he lost his job as a welder?

Dow: He worked there 17 years so, yeah...

IA: Like he started before the War at REO?

Dow: Well, he, he, well, take 17 from '75 and what is it?

IA: Oh, okay.

IB: Oh, he was there at the very end, too?

Dow: Oh, yes, he was there at the very end, too.

IA: So he started .....

Dow: We all, most of us walked out, most of us were let out on April the 5th, 1975. Very few of 'em were left.

IA: Now, was he a welder at REO?

Dow: He was a welder at REO.

IA: And then you called him and got him another job at REO?

Dow: No, no. No, he was working for, where was he working at the time? Well, he did maintenance work on buildings.

IA: Oh, okay.

Dow: Construction.

IB: Oh, okay.

IA: Oh, then when he got laid off from that...

Dow: And when he got laid off from that, yeah, it would have been just temporarily but I didn't...

IA: But you got him the job at REO as a welder?

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Dow: Yes, yes, I got him the job at REO. Well, the personnel manager said, well, send him in, you know, we'll find a job for him, you know.

IB: Isn't that amazing?

Dow: Oh, they were, they were always good. I mean, if you had, if you worked there and you had somebody that you wanted to get in there, usually they would find them a job...

IB: Especially if you were a good employee, then they would...

Dow: They, they figured, well, they figured, yes. They figured if you were a good employee and, you know, I mean, they had access to your records that you weren't going to ask for help from somebody else, you know, unless they would be a good worker, too, and if they weren't a good worker, they would, there was always ways of getting rid of 'em. But I don't know, I can't ever remember of anybody ever recommending somebody in the family, you know, that didn't turn out.

IA: Yeah. Did you husband stay a welder for the 17 years?

Dow: Yes, yes. He stayed a welder for 17 years, um, hum. I think his boss for 17 years, too, was, well, it was Jack Harris or what was Barrett's name? Jack Barrett. He worked for both of those fellows. Jack Barrett went to Pennsylvania when they sold out. Another company out in Pennsylvania started building REO trucks out there.

IA: Oh, it's Harrisburg.

Dow: Yes, in Harrisburg.

IA: Yeah, we just talked to Jack Downs about that.

Dow: Oh, did ya?

IA: Yeah.

Dow: Okay. Well, Jack Barrett left REO and took a job with, out in Pennsylvania but I'm pretty sure Jack, Jack Harris has passed away. I'm not sure but I'm almost positive he is but he stayed right there for, he never went back to construction. He just stayed right there. He liked, you know, welding and all.

IB: And it was a good job.

Dow: And it was a good job. It was year round, steady job and there again, see, we were both working at the same place. Basically we had the same hours, you know. REO didn't put in too much overtime unless, well, unless if it was it was Saturdays. We put in a lot of

Saturdays but it was never any long 10, 12 hours. Now, I worked at Oldsmobile.

IA: Oh, you did?

Dow: Yes. I left REO, after I left REO.

IA: Oh, in '75?

Dow: Yes.

IA: Yes.

Dow: I left, in '76 or '77, I went to Oldsmobile.

IB: Now, what did you do there?

Dow: I worked in the off, well, I started in the factory and I had several jobs at Oldsmobile. That was another thing. Before I went to Olds, before I went to Oldsmobile though, I went to the Credit Office out in Sears. I didn't like that at all and then I went to working for the prosecuting attorney downtown which was Mr. Scodeller.

IB: Oh, yes.

Dow: Yes. That was, that was an interesting...

IA: I bet that was interesting.

Dow: job. That was very interesting. That was an interesting job and I liked it but the pay for the county, working for the county, the pay was very low at that time. Since, right after I left from there they got a big raise but I had already had my application in at Oldsmobile because my husband wasn't able to find a job that was paying anything at all. At that time, things were very bad.

IA: Yeah, the mid-'70s were hard.

Dow: You know, and we didn't know, and at my age, people weren't hiring people, you know, and if you were in your 30s, 40s at that time, people just were not hiring you. They didn't want only high school kids and they really didn't, I never thought for one minute that with my years of experience as a secretary that I would have any trouble whatsoever of finding a job but I was too old and they didn't want, they could take a girl out of high school or fresh out of college and train them their way, their way of doing things rather than trying to take somebody older and try to teach them new ways, ....., of course, it was the insurance, too. I can see the company's idea. They had to pay bigger, higher insurance on paying on me than what they would have just a young girl. So if they had a choice between a

girl that was 20 years old and one was 45, you know who they're gonna take. So I had my application in at Oldsmobile and my brother worked at Oldsmobile so with his help in calling on the personnel manager, they called me. In fact, I turned down a job at Oldsmobile three times before I finally went over there because I working at the personnel, or the attorney, for the prosecuting attorney and that was a good group of people that I worked for down there, those attorneys I worked for down there was a good group and I enjoyed 'em and I enjoyed the girls and all but the pay wasn't that good and Oldsmobile had told me that they could get me into a project. Oldsmobile has several projects, at that time they did, they had several projects going on all of the time and they told me, well, if I'd come in there, they would get me in on one of those projects. So here I was working in the prosecuting attorney's office and my boss at that time was in the Upper Peninsula and Oldsmobile calls me and they say, you've got to come to work here the next day or we're gonna pull your application and you won't, as I said, because this is the third time since you've told us no and I said, oh, my God. My boss is in the Upper Peninsula on a case. I've got a stack load of cases this high on my desk. What am I going to do and she says, well, I don't know 'cause I had always thought that I could have at least 10 days, you know, to give my supervisor notice. So I said, oh, my God. So I told 'em, well, I'll be there but then I sit there at my desk and I thought, what am I gonna do. Well, I went out to the other office to collect one of the other girls and I said, well, what would you do? I mean, here I am with all these cases stacked up on my desk of all these people that I've called that are coming into court the next day, you know, and all these letters and everything like that and my boss is in the Upper Peninsula and no way to get a hold of him and she just, Susie just said, quite. Just write him a notice, she says, and be gone. She said, they'll reschedule the cases and I said, all these people I've called and they're coming into court tomorrow. I'm not gonna be there. So what? It happens all the time. So...

IA: That's what you did?

Dow: that's what I did and I went to Oldsmobile the next day and took a physical and they put me in what they call the 150 Building which was driving cars off from the line after they were built and ready to get to be shipped. But we had, they have what they call, in the car, they have what they call a history card and that history card, you learn how to read it and it tells you where this car is to be taken, whether it's ready to be shipped or whether it has, it's not completed. It has, maybe it has to be repainted. Maybe it's missing some parts or different reasons and then you have different locations that you'd have to take that car and park it, you see, like that.

IB: Oh, well, that's interesting.

Dow: Yeah, it was kind of interesting there. But ah...

IA: But it's not an office job.

Dow: No, it wasn't an office job but it was different. It was different than an office job and I kind of enjoyed getting away from the office work for a chance.

IB: Out from under the stress for just a little while.

Dow: Yeah, for a while. Yeah, and this was different and, of course, I had never, I had never been in the factory before. Even though I worked at REO for 20 years, 25 years, I had never been but through the factor about three times and that was to walk from our office on Washington Avenue over to Baker Street for some reason that I had to go over there and I usually had one of the plant protection or somebody take me through the factory. So my experience of being in a factory was just to follow the guard through and it was, it was really an experience to go through, or work in a factory. I mean...

IB: A whole different world, isn't it?

Dow: It's a whole different world. It certainly is and it was very stressful. It was very stressful. At that time, well of course, it was kind of fun right at the first, you know, and meeting a bunch of different people and learning all this but then it got, it got boring. You know, your mind wasn't working. I mean, all you was doing was getting in a car and driving it out to the lot, back, driving another car. You stand in line 'cause there was other people that had the same job and it was this repetitious, the same thing all the time, takin' a car out and come back and it was usually 12 hours a day, 10 to 12 hours a day. They were really working at that time and it got...

IB: You said you made more pay?

Dow: Oh, see, the pay was...

IA: A lot more. That's what made the difference.

Dow: Yeah, that's what made, that was the thing that got me, left the county because the county was paying low at the time and the difference was, and the benefits. The benefits at Oldsmobile was, and the much better insurance, much better pension plan and the wages were so much different there and because my husband wasn't working and because of my age and I didn't know whether he was going to get a job or what he was going to do, you know, at that time...

IB: You have to make these .....

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Dow: Yeah, and it was very scary at the time 'cause nobody was getting a job and the only way you got a job was if you had any pull, you know. So, but it was nice, and I stayed there for 15 years.

IA: Doing that job?

Dow: No, oh, no, no.

IB: When did you go from that job to the next one?

Dow: Oh, God, I worked the line for a while. Because of cutbacks and different things...

IB: On the assembly line?

Dow: On the as, I went to, well, working in 150, what they call the 150 Building, it's kind of a, it's set aside. It's a building that is set aside. It's kind of, the end of the line building.

IB: It's more like the final product?

Dow: The final product, yeah.

IB: Ready to roll out.

Dow: Yeah, before, before they really ship the car and that's not really factory. I mean, it was a completely different...

IB: No, it's not really a.....

Dow: all the cars, you don't see anything in the assembling of the cars. When the cars come up there, they're all finished, you know. They had to be painted. A lot of times they were missing maybe, oh, an air cleaner or maybe the brakes weren't quite right or, it was kind of a repair place although they, although they have a repair down on the line, you know. But it was kind of finishing touches and a lot of it was interior, too.

IA: Oh, I see.

Dow: Yeah, but mostly it was just sending the car out, waiting for new parts or maybe the license bracket or something or other, you know, had to be put on there. For some reason or other, they probably ran out of 'em down in the shop and they couldn't ship the car without it or a lot of times, they put parts on, like whenever we sent a car to Canada, we had to take off the rear view mirror on the outside. This was due to export. This was due to export.

IB: So it wouldn't get knocked off in the shipment or...



Dow: No, it was something about, if the car, when they ship it to Canada, if it's missing like the rear view mirror on the outside, see, that car wasn't complete so they didn't have to pay as much money if it was an incomplete car as they were if it was an assembled car.

IA: And they would just complete it in Canada.

Dow: And they would complete it. The mirror would be put in the backseat and they'd finish it in Canada.

IA: Oh, my goodness.

IB: That's interesting.

Dow: And it's, that's politics.

IA: That's right.

Dow: That's politics.

IB: Yeah, and that keeps the people up there working, too.

Dow: It keep 'em, well, no, we have a big factory in Canada, too. But it's just one of those things.

IA: And where did you go after that?

Dow: I went to, well, they had several cutbacks and I went down on the line for a while. But that was terrible and from there, I went into the office.

IA: You did? You finally got back into the office?

Dow: Yes, yes, I went back into, I went to the office down there and I stayed in the office for, oh, quite a while. I'm not sure exactly how long but I stayed in, well, then they needed, then they wanted somebody, they started a new program where we have, Fisher Body is over on the west side of town and Oldsmobile here. Well, the cars were starting to be built over in Fisher Body and then they're shipped over here, not complete. So they have to finish 'em up over in Oldsmobile. Well, they had a lot of things that were wrong. Well, so Oldsmobile said, Fisher Body people weren't doing their job. Oldsmobile, well, Oldsmobile people said, Fisher Body were not doing their job or were not completing their job or they were sending their wirings wrong. When they got over here, it caused problems over here. There was tension back and forth and this had been going on for a number of years. They wanted somebody to act as a liaison between the two companies there. So I was picked to try to be a mediator between the two and try to solve problems that they would have or find out why, why this problem. One was a sealer problem

which, you'd have to work there to know what it is but they have a, a lot of, well, you'd have to know. You'd have to see the cars out there being built at the Fisher Body but a lot of parts were, where it come together, the metal parts on cars on the frame where they come, come together in the seams, they have what they call a sealer and it's done by gun, a big, long rod. They called it a sealer gun but it's really a big, long rod and it has a sealer. It's like a glue and they...

IA: Like a caulking gun...

Dow: A caulking gun or, that caulked these different parts and one thing but a lot of times, the sealer would get into and cover up other holes.

IA: Oh.

Dow: Other holes, which when they got over here to Oldsmobile and people would go to put their part in that hole, they couldn't go in there because of this sealer problem. Well, this was a big problem because it happened many, many times and so that car would go down the line 'cause they, the line was moving and the guy couldn't do his job and it was due to the fact that over in Fisher Body, somebody was sealing up those holes either intentionally or not intentionally, just doing their job but not knowing what they were doing, not knowing that they were causing a problem over here.

IB: So then you would be called and you'd go over to Fisher?

Dow: I would have to go to Fisher Body and I'd ask the people, please don't seal these over. Why, why are you sealing these holes? I'm trying to explain to them why they shouldn't and why they should be careful and at the same time, come back here and make peace with these people and tell 'em, try to tell 'em why they're doing that and it was, it was, many a problems were all over the place.

IA: You were a problem solver.

Dow: Sometimes the fixtures, yes, sometimes the fixtures didn't work right and it was, it was a problem solving job.

IA: Troubleshooting.

Dow: Troubleshooting, yeah, they called .....

IB: Did you like that position?

Dow: Yes and no. It was stressful because you were working, you had to be very careful. I was from Oldsmobile. I couldn't go over on the line

because we have two different unions. I couldn't go over there and walk up to that person on the line over there at Fisher Body...

IB: 'Cause you're from a different union.

Dow: Yes, hey, you're doing the job wrong. They aren't gonna take it from me.

IA: Yeah, really.

Dow: And yet, at the same time, I had to go through their supervisor which sometimes a supervisor could care less whether...

IB: He's makin' production so...

Dow: He was making production and he could care less and sometimes he went out and sometimes he didn't go out, whether he did or not, it was very stressful. Sometimes, and at the same time, I had to watch myself on, at Oldsmobile because some of the people at Oldsmobile said, well, hell, I've been here for 25 years and you just been here for 10 years or five years so who do you think you are trying to tell me how to do my job, at the same time. You had to watch yourself comin' and goin'. And there was a lot of jealousy between Oldsmobile and Fisher Body.

IA: Fisher, yeah.

Dow: There was a lot of...

IB: Was there really?

Dow: Ooooh! A lot of jealousy to the extent of the supervisors out there and it, it was...

IB: That's an interesting..... I'd like to explore that one sometime.

Dow: But it, it was, I met a lot of people and I didn't have any trouble with anybody. I didn't have any trouble with anybody, the supervisors or the people themself. I used to go through there and when I'd walk from, do you know the length of, you ever drive past Fisher Body...

IB: Yes.

Dow: sometimes, just, just think and I walked both sides, up, through every department in Fisher Body and every department in Oldsmobile.

IB: My goodness, you got your exercise.

Dow: I have walked miles and miles and miles.

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IB: They should have paid her by the mile.

Dow: I'd a been a millionaire today. I put in many miles over there and I'd walk down those lines and they'd holler out, hi Doris, how you doin'.

IB: So you were doing a good job?

Dow: Yes, and many, many, and when I left there, when I left Olds, retired from Oldsmobile, Fisher Body gave me a retirement party, too.

IB: Is that right?

Dow: Yes, yes.

IA: That's wonderful. That's quite a tribute to you.

Dow: Which they've not done with anybody else. They've never done it with, for anybody else.

IA: For any outside person.

Dow: No.

IB: Is that a fact?

Dow: No, they never, and even to the supervisors up in the office, the high ones, when I had, I had a retirement party at Oldsmobile and there was over 800 people. They've never had as many people at a retirement party as what I had at my retirement party and people came from, all the way from Fisher Body over to my retirement part even after they had gave me one at Fisher Body.

IB: For goodness sake. Isn't it a wonderful thing for you to think about?

Dow: Yes, and I have films about that, too. They recorded it on a film, on a video.

IB: That's great.

Dow: Yes.

IA: Now, when everybody left REO at the end, there were no parties. There was nothing fabulous I imagine.

Dow: Oh, no, very terrible. It was really terrible.

IB: Let's go back to a happier time and you were working in the office at REO and we want to talk about the girls' club.

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Dow: Oh, the girls' ...

IA: I was gonna ask actually, to get us back to REO, what you thought were the big differences between, I mean, obviously you worked in Olds in the '70s and '80s so it was a different time, you know, I mean...

Dow: I worked, yes...

IA: The economy was different and the making of cars was different but was there anything about the atmosphere between Olds and...

Dow: It was cold.

IA: It wasn't as warm or friendly or...

Dow: No, no. It was cold. I met a lot of good people at Oldsmobile. I have no qualms about Oldsmobile.

IA: But it was a bigger place, too.

Dow: But it was, it was a bigger, but the people were different. The people are different...

IA: At Olds, between REO?

Dow: Yes.

IA: Yeah.

Dow: The people at REO, maybe it was the people that I knew. Maybe it was because I, it was my first job, you might say, you know, one of the first jobs. Maybe it was because my other worked there and I, and all, the whole, I can't really say that because everybody that has ever worked at REO, they all say the same thing, that it was a warm place, it was a family place and I didn't hear that at Oldsmobile. They didn't care...

IA: About you as a person.

Dow: Ah, no.

IB: Or about the job they were doing, maybe.

Dow: Well, yeah, they cared about the job that they were doing but they didn't care about you as a person. I, one thing particularly that I really noticed, at REO, if somebody didn't show up for work, we were concerned about them, whether they were ill, whether it was a family problem or what. I mean, we really were concerned. We, we did what we could to make it easier for that person. At Oldsmobile, if

somebody doesn't show up for work, so what. They don't even, they don't even care. They don't even ask, well, what was the matter. It's just that, somebody else takes, steps down and takes their job, does their job and that's it. .... I couldn't, didn't people wouldn't come to work, you know, and I said, well, what's the matter? Is she sick? Aw. Which is true, which is true. I think with Olds, you'll find a lot of people that just take a day off just because they have other things to do or just tired.

IB: Just don't want to go to work.

Dow: Just don't want to go in where REO, it was usually because they were sick or we knew why they weren't there. It was much warmer. It was just, a different feeling completely.

IA: And it was more because of the workers and their relationship with each other rather than what the management did, do you think?

Dow: We were closer, management at REO, management and the people were very close.

IA: Closer at REO?

Dow: Oh, yes, yeah, they were very close.

IA: Why do you think that was? Were they more likely the same kind of people or any specific policies or things that they did that made them closer.

Dow: It was just the people. It was just, John Tucker was one of our, he was one of the, he was the president of REO when I went to work there. Wonderful person. Everybody ....., but John Tucker, which was a tall, giant of a man, he was a wonderful person. He spoke to the janitors, the people that was down on their hands and knees scrubbin' the floor. He spoke to everybody.

IA: Yeah, we've heard that's true.

Dow: Nobody was beneath Mr. Tucker.

IA: Yeah, well, it started way back with Olds...

Dow: It started, yes, yes.

IB: It comes from the top down, doesn't it?

Dow: Um, hum, yes. He would stop and he'd talk to you in the hallway. It didn't make any difference what you did or anything like that there, whether he thought you were doing your job or not, he stopped and talked to you. Like I say, he, but Oldsmobile, you wouldn't see...

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IA: No.

Dow: You wouldn't see top management stopping and talking to the janitors or one of the sweepers. That would be way beneath 'em. They, they definitely would never do that.

IB: It's almost a caste system over there.

Dow: Oh, definitely, but ah, and we had this with most of our, there was a few supervisors at REO in later years that wouldn't do it.

IA: They got stuffy?

Dow: They, very stuffy but then there was others that were real good out there and I think a lot of it had to do with the stress, too, that they were under.

IA: Yeah, 'cause things .....

Dow: But a lot of people, but as I say, John Tucker was a, and I think, well, no, when I first went to work there, Mr. Scheer was there. Mr. Scheer was real nice, too.

IB: He was the president?

Dow: He was the president but I didn't get to know him like I did John Tucker. They were real nice.

IA: So that was the difference you thought, in them?

Dow: The difference, yes.

IA: How about the other stuff like the clubs you were talking about before and the kind of activities that went, that were organized through .....

Dow: Well, we had the girl's, the REO Girl's Club, that there, as I say, that was made up of the girls in the office.

IA: The office girls?

Dow: That was the office girls.

IA: Was there something for the girls on, who worked in the factories, too?

Dow: At that time, no.

IA: No, okay.

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Dow: The girls in the factory were later invited into the...

IA: Oh, good.

Dow: Girls, but they, very, very few of 'em ever came into the Girl's.

IB: I think that's true from what we know.

Dow: Yeah, most of 'em, they always said, well, the girls in the office are too good for us. They were out there, their jobs were dirtier out in the, and they didn't feel right in coming in, sitting at the table with a girl that was sitting next to her with polished shoes and nails and so on and so forth, when they were out in the factory.

IA: Yeah.

IB: And covered with oil.

Dow: Or covered with oil or whatever, you know. They just didn't feel right but there was a lot of, a lot of the girls were enjoyed and we always invited them in but they, very few, not too many of 'em ever came in because they said, well, we were always too good for 'em which wasn't true but I can see where they would feel that way.

IA: That's what I think is so interesting about your life, your work history, is that you went back and forth...

Dow: Oh, yes.

IA: from what I've been reading. That's pretty unusual, you know, if you're an office girl, that's, ..... pretty much if you're in the factory, it's very hard to make that transition.

Dow: It was, that transition to work into the office was very mind boggling, I'll tell ya. It was, I never thought that, well, I think the, the only thing I, the reason why I think I stayed at Oldsmobile was I ran into a girl when I first went into, went to work at Oldsmobile, when I went into this one building, 150, I ran into a girl that I had not seen for a number of years. I was in an automobile accident several years before, when I was young. I was only about 18 years old, I was in an automobile accident and six of my friends were killed.

IA: Oh, my goodness.

Dow: Yes, and ah, this girl that I ran into at Oldsmobile, she was one of our clique but she wasn't with us that night. Well, over, and I was in the hospital for six months unconscious.

IB: Oh, my goodness.



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Dow: Yeah.

IB: It's a wonder you survived, isn't it?

Dow: Oh, yeah.

IB: Were you the only survivor from that car...

Dow: I was the only, no, the fellow that I was with got out of it with just a bump on his head. The other five were killed. Yeah, or four, the other four were killed but anyhow, I ran into this girl at Oldsmobile. She was working in this, doing the same thing that I ended, driving the cars out and she, she was kind of a loner. She was kind of a loner so I got reacquainted with her there and I, she just, and she had had years of, in there at Oldsmobile so she was, knew everybody (end side 1)

IA: .....

Dow: Yeah, yeah, right. I probably couldn't of made it without her because it was so different. I couldn't, you didn't have nothing to use your mind for and I thought, oh, God. What am I doing? These people are just zombies, walking around doing the same thing day after day after day and it's the same thing down, when I was working on the line, when I went down on the line, it was the same thing, putting this nuts and bolts on and screwing it down and then waiting for the next car and doing the same thing for eight hours a day and I, God, my mind's not, my mind's not working, you know. Anybody can do this, you know. But ah, but back to the girl's...

IA: Girl's.

Dow: club there, yes, we had a real good girl's club and we had quite a big membership and I have several scrapbooks of different parties and shows. Oh, we used to put on, oh, we'd put on showers. We put on style shows. We had Christmas parties. We put on several charity, different things.

IB: A charity that would reach outside the factory into the community?

Dow: Oh, yes, outside the factory, rummage sales that we would put on to make money, moneymaking projects, a lot of cake and cookies were sold to outside as well as inside the factory.

IA: And did the company encourage these activities?

Dow: Oh, yes. Oh, the company was always behind us.

IA: Yeah.

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Dow: We had a club room, we had a room in ...

IA: In the clubhouse...

Dow: the clubhouse which unfortunately is gone which really broke us up. I think, I think that was, I think that hurt, when they took the clubhouse away, I think that hurt us as bad as losing, losing our job.

IA: The company, yeah.

Dow: Losing the company.

IB: ..... childhood.....

Dow: Oh, it, it really, it really was. It really was hard to take and for a long time afterwards, none of us could drive down Washington. In fact, I think most of us evade going down that street to this day.

IB: Washington or Baker.

Dow: Yes. I think we, we kind of, I can go down there now but I never go down there with what I think of the kind, that's where my office used to be, right up there. That's where the clubhouse was and the good times that we had, the charity balls that we had. The decorating, we used to, our bosses used to let us out to go over to decorate for the different charities and we used to have, several hundred people would come to our charity balls.

IA: What kinds of things did you do charities for?

IB: Yeah, that's what I was wondering. They were fundraisers for...

Dow: Fundraisers, they were, for the Marian Eilich Cancer Fund...

IA: Ah, huh, for cancer research.

Dow: For cancer research. We bought different, several different pieces of equipment...

IA: For hospitals.

Dow: For the Sparrow Hospital, yes. One in particular that I remember was a big wheel bed.

IB: Oh, this was...

Dow: Several years ago and it cost several thousand dollars. It was for people that were either burned or couldn't turn themselves.

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IB: Oh, like a striker frame?

Dow: Yes, like a striker frame. It was very new at that time but they would put these people on there and ever so often it would...

IA: Turn so they wouldn't get sores.

Dow: turn, turn, and sores and things like that and we bought the bed and then after we bought the bed, there was different components that you could buy for it, to...

IB: To add on to it?

Dow: add on to it, yes.

IA: Did you do things for the Y or other types of local organizations or churches?

IB: Or blood drives?

IA: Or blood drives?

Dow: Yes, we had blood drives. I'm trying to remember some of the things we did.

IB: Hilda Smith was, in a picture in her album, there was a picture of baskets of food and...

Dow: Oh, the food baskets...

IA: For Christmas.

Dow: for Christmas, yes. We always...

IB: And those, you said were for the REO families...

Dow: For REO families, the needy REO families, yes. I don't, no, I don't, probably don't have any of those pictures. I have some of those pictures at home and I'm sure Hilda has some.

IA: Yeah, 'cause we didn't know about that before we started, those pictures.

Dow: Oh, you didn't?

IB: We didn't know that they, the club reached out beyond even their own little group. This is all new to me.

Dow: Oh, yes, yes.

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IA: You did community type work.

Dow: For the community, yes. We took care of the REO people themselves first but anything left over was, ah, through the clearinghouse. It was always cleared through the clearinghouse. Now, a couple of the girls will, I hope, I don't know whether she'll be there tomorrow, no, she probably, I'll have to call her and see if she can make it.

IB: Who is that?

Dow: Ardith Pappon.

IA: Oh, we've met Ardith.

Dow: Have you met Ardith?

IB: I'm really anxious to talk to her.

IA: Yeah, we have to call her.

IB: .....

Dow: Okay, yeah, okay. Now, Ardith was one of the ones that worked on this fundraising for Christmas.

IA: Oh, okay.

Dow: Yes. I don't know whether she has any pictures. I've got a few pictures of that there. That, that was kind of, well, that was made up of several different people, the union and the...

IA: ..... participated?

Dow: Yes, ah, huh.

IA: Did you go to the clubhouse as a child, too, because your mother worked there?

Dow: No, no, I worked in Traverse, I lived in Traverse City as a child.

IA: Oh.

Dow: I never came down here until '42.

IB: Oh, during the War?

Dow: During the War.

IB: Did she go to work in the factory during the War?

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Dow: My mother never did go to work in the factory. She always worked in the office.

IB: Oh, I see, okay.

Dow: Yeah, my mother worked, yeah. I don't know what year she went to work there but I came down here in '42.

IA: Okay. Now, you said you were born in Lansing but yet...

Dow: No, I was born in Traverse City.

IA: Traverse City, oh, okay.

Dow: Yes, I was born in Traverse City and I went to school in Traverse City.

IA: Oh, okay.

IB: And then you came down here and went to Acme Business College.

Dow: Went to Acme Business School down here, yeah.

IA: Oh, so you came here for business college?

Dow: Yes, um, hum.

IA: And your mom came with you?

Dow: My mother came with me and two brothers, yes.

IA: Oh.

IB: And you all settled in Lansing...

Dow: And settled in Lansing.

IB: and she went to work at the REO.

Dow: And she went to work at REO and my brothers went to school here.

IA: Oh, I see. Did she do clerical work up in Traverse City, too?

Dow: No.

IA: She didn't?

Dow: No.

IA: Okay.

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Dow: No, that was, she did that before she was married. My mother's from Chicago.

IA: Oh.

Dow: She had schooling, you know...

IA: In Chicago?

Dow: In Chicago...

IB: And once she was married she was a homemaker...

Dow: and then she married my, yes.

IA: I wish I'd met your mother 'cause my first book was about clerical workers in Chicago.

Dow: Oh, really?

IA: Yeah.

Dow: Unfortunately my mother's passed away.

IA: Yeah, 'cause that's exactly the kind of person I wrote my book about.

Dow: Yeah, oh, yeah. Yeah.

IA: That's interesting. And so you had two brothers and you said one of them was at Olds but at some point one was at REO, too?

Dow: Yes, yeah.

IA: Okay. So you didn't, so the clubhouse was really something that you knew from as a, knew about as an adult, working person.

Dow: As adult, as adult person working at REO, yes.

IA: Okay, and besides the, ah, girl's club activities, were there other things that you did through the clubhouse? I mean, did you go to the movies there or...

Dow: No, I, that was all gone by the time...

IA: Oh, it was...

Dow: Well, I, it probably was there in the '40s but I didn't have anything to do with it.

IA: Oh, okay.

Dow: ..... I worked for other companies before I went to work there. As I said, I worked for, well, I worked for J.C. Penny Company for one thing. Well, I worked for the State. When I was in that accident back in the '40s, I was working for the State back then and then after I was in the accident there, that laid me up for a while and I didn't go back to the State. I went back to the State but I didn't stay at the State. Things had changed at the State and it was back during the War, things had changed at the State so I left there and went to work for J.C. Penny Company.

IB: What did you do at J.C. Penny?

Dow: I worked in the office.

IB: In the office?

Dow: Yeah.

IB: That used to be one of my favorite stores?

Dow: Oh, did ya? That was when it was downtown...

IB: That and Knapp's, yes.

Dow: Way down there.

IB: Well, it was right on the corner of Michigan and Washington.

Dow: Michigan and Washington. That's when I worked there.

IB: In the early times, yes.

Dow: Yeah. I worked there for a while there but then I eventually ended up going to Flint. I had some friends that were in Flint.

IA: Oh, that's right. You mentioned Flint.

Dow: And I was moving all over at that time and ...

IB: And you were single...

Dow: I was single, traveling around, you know, ..... this job here, job there, everything like that. Didn't know what I wanted to do and then I met this fellow and I, in fact, I thought about marrying him at one time but, but ah, then I got this, as I said, I, they sent me to school in New York.

IA: Oh, for the dressmaking.

Dow: For the dress, yeah, managing, their way of, their way of...

IB: Their way of doing business.

Dow: doing things, yeah, business and all, one thing another but before that, I worked in the store over there in Flint for, oh, quite a while and then they asked me if I'd like that, you know, take over manager because the woman that was there, her husband was ill and she was contemplating on leaving 'cause he'd had heart trouble, one thing another and she was thinking about leaving the store and retiring. So they asked me if I wanted, so that's how I went to New York and got all that schooling.

IA: Where'd you go in New York? I'm just curious 'cause I'm from New York, too.

Dow: New York City.

IA: You lived in Manhattan?

Dow: Yeah, Manhattan, Manhattan, yes.

IA: That must of been very exciting.

Dow: It was. Oh, it was wonderful 'cause I had an expense account and they paid...

IB: Oh, my dear!

Dow: they paid everything.

IB: Wow.

Dow: I paid nothing. They paid, they furnished, I had...

IA: That's like hitting the lottery.

IB: Right.

Dow: Well, I, I was flown in there, a car waited for me there, was waiting right there at the airport there. Whenever, and they took me and I can't tell you the name of the hotel. I wish I, I had those old papers but....

IA: I bet they took you to the Barbazon. That was for young women.

Dow: No...

IB: .....

IA: That's right. No, it wasn't the Barbazon, huh?



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Dow: No, it wasn't the Barbazon. God, I can't remember the name of that. Oh, it was a real fancy, fancy place. Oh, ...

IB: They didn't take you to something in a side street?

Dow: Oh, no, no. I had the very best. I had the best. The room, the suite that I had was a huge, was one huge suite with a bed and everything and then off on the side was a little kitchen, you know, and a balcony out overlooking the river, you know. Oh, it was beautiful. But whenever I had to go anywhere or anything like that, all I had to do was call and there was a car waiting for me and a chauffeur and I was taken to the school and back and, of course, all my expenses were paid. Whatever I wanted to eat or anything like that, they were all taken care of.

IB: Oh, my goodness.

Dow: I spent not one cent of my own money.

IA: Wow.

Dow: Or anything like that. I went over to Buffalo a couple of different times. That was all paid for.

IA: Were they annoyed with you when you decided to leave and not take advantage of...

Dow: They weren't very happy.

IA: Yeah, .....

Dow: ..... after .....

IB: After counting on you and spending their money on you...

Dow: Yes, ah, huh.

IB: and training you.

Dow: They weren't, but they were, they were nice.

IB: They understood.

Dow: I just explained to 'em that my brothers was in the service, my mother was all alone and, in fact, they give me a nice letter of recommendation and told me, if things didn't work out...

IA: That you could come back.

Dow: that I could come back.

IB: Oh, that's lovely.

Dow: Yes, that was real nice. You know, I still have that letter. I mean, yes they were upset because they had spent a lot of money but they still were, I was still offered to come back.

IB: Beyond the money, they had a worthwhile person here that was going to be such a good employee that they hated to lose you, too. I can see that.

Dow: Yes, well, of course, I was young enough, too, see, at the time and this, this is always something that companies look for, is somebody young enough so that they can start you in down here and then you're gonna be, work, you can work your way up.

IA: Now, you, you were, you've been a working person your whole life.

Dow: My whole life, yes.

IA: Your whole life, but a lot of the times during the '50s and the '60s, at least from kind of, some of the things that I read, a lot of the sentiment in the, in this country or in the world was that, you know, women should stay home and not get in the work place. Did you ever encounter anything like that, that maybe...

Dow: Never.

IA: especially in hard times...

Dow: Never.

IA: that this should be a man doing this...

Dow: No.

IA: 'cause he's got to take care of a family or anything like that?

Dow: I never encountered any of that there. I never encountered any of the girls that felt like that either.

IA: Really?

Dow: No.

IA: That they were doing a good job.

Dow: I never, I never had that problem. I, I've read and I've heard an awful lot about this but...

IB: Especially in the '50s.

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Dow: Yeah, especially in the '50s but, no, I never encountered anything like that at all.

IB: It might be, too, the type of jobs...

Dow: I might, that's right...

IB: ..... office .....

Dow: Yes.

IB: 'Cause people expected you to either be a secretary or a nurse or a, you know, a teacher.

Dow: Yes, I think there was, I was always in the office, you know...

IA: And that made it okay.

Dow: and that was a woman's job.

IA: Right.

IB: By the time you got to Olds...

Dow: And I was single. I was single, see, at the time. Maybe if, had I a been married, they would have said, well, you should be home taking care of your family, you know, but I wasn't. You know, I was single and I was...

IA: Was it hard to do both? I'm very interested in this since I'm trying to do it myself, you know, be a working person and have a family, too?

Dow: It maybe, I don't think so.

IA: Oh? I'm tired all the time.

Dow: Really?

IB: ..... they know what it's like.

Dow: I look back on it now and a lot of the things I did then I wonder, how did I do it?

IA: How'd you manage.

Dow: Yes.

IB: I think the same thing. How'd I do that.

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Dow: That's right. That's right and I think, oh my God. When I see some of these people with a couple of kids, have two or three kids and they're gettin' up and they got to get 'em off to school and, but then I think, I stop and I think back, I did that. It didn't hurt me and I didn't think anything of it at the time.

IB: No, you just do it because that's what you have to do.

Dow: You do it 'cause you have to do it.

IB: That's the thing. How many children do you have?

Dow: I don't have any. I had a niece that I raised.

IB: Oh, I see.

Dow: But I don't have any children, but I took my niece when she was just two years old.

IB: So that's the same thing.

Dow: Yes.

IB: Really, with the responsibility and the love and the care.

Dow: Yeah, uh, huh.

IA: Did you, your mom help you though with...

Dow: No! Oh, no. Oh, no. My mother always said, I raised you kids...

IA: That's enough.

Dow: That's it. My mother, my mother very seldom or ever babysat for us. We took ..... with us whenever we went anywhere or anything like that. It was always, we took, but we didn't have, we didn't have nursery schools and things like that, like they have now. When I was working, I dropped her off at a babysitter.

IA: Oh, you had a sitter for her.

Dow: Yeah, for, when I was working and she was going to school and all, you know, but I, and I look back and as I say, I think, God, did I do that. In fact, I used to, I used to, I lived over on the north side of town, I remember, and I had a girlfriend and I didn't have a car at that time, I had a girlfriend that lived over on the south side of town and she had three little kids, step, one right after another and I can remember more than one time of coming over, on the bus 'cause I didn't have a car and I would go get her children, I lived on the north side and she lives on the south side of town, I would go get

her children and take 'em over to my house which I lived in a three room, small...

IA: To look after them?

Dow: to give her relief and her kids were all in diapers at that time.

IA: That was very nice of you.

Dow: But I would take them home. I'd take 'em on the bus, I would take 'em on the bus and the little boy invariably would wet his pants the minute we'd go to get on the bus.

IB: Yeah, yeah, I've been there, I know....

Dow: His ..... would be soaking wet and I had to go all across town with these three little children like that.

IA: I bet she blesses you now for having done that for her.

IB: .....

Dow: Ah, she's gone now and in fact, I just went to the funeral.

IA: Oh, my.

IB: Oh, I'm sorry.

Dow: But they're all in their, older now. I guess in their 30s.

IB: I wonder if he still has that problem when he gets on a bus.

Dow: He lives over, he's a contractor. Now, I don't know.

IB: Oh, I bet he'd laugh.

Dow: Yeah, laugh, oh, yeah. I can remember...

IA: He'd be embarrassed.

Dow: Yes, he would be embarrassed. He would be embarrassed now but I used to tell him, when he was smaller, when he was 15, 16 years old, Michael, I can remember more than one time, you know, and ah, but I used to do that but now I think, oh, my God. Can you imagine anybody doing that and taking 'em clear across town.

IB: Nuts.

Dow: Three little kids but I see people doing it, I see young girls doing it.

IA: Yeah.

Dow: You know.

IA: It's just not easy. It never was and it still isn't.

Dow: It never was but I didn't think...

IB: I don't think it will ever change.

IA: No.

IB: You just do it because that's what you have to do.

Dow: No, but you do it at the time.

IA: When you're responsible...

Dow: But I think now kids, the kids have it so much easier nowadays than what we did then.

IA: Well, there are more, like you said, there are more schools and places to go.

Dow: There's more schools and things. We didn't have the nursery schools and all that, they have now.

IB: Of course, they have their own set of worries, too.

Dow: Oh, well, that's different now than what it was then.

IB: But the basic thing is still there.

Dow: It's still there.

IB: The mother with the responsibilities and never enough time and...

IA: And you still had a home to take care of.

Dow: You still had a home to take care of and a husband to...

IB: It's like wearing three different hats or three different lives almost. I'd like to talk just a bit about the end at REO.

IA: Oh, okay.

Dow: Very bad. Well, we had, as I say, I suppose we could all, we should have seen it coming.

IB: Really? Why do you think that?

Dow: Well, and I'm not alone. I've heard other girls, other girls talk about it. We always figured or at least I always figured that if, well, we was changing, buying and selling, different companies were buying and selling us. We were always changing letterhead there but we always figured or I did anyhow, that if things were ever gonna go bad or close down that, well, we'd see the, the big supervisor is leaving. I always said, well, if I see so and so leaving and other vice presidents and presidents leaving, I'll know that there was something, something in the wind, you know. Or ordinarily, you would see it through the correspondence. You know, you'd hear, you'd see it through the correspondence or get something some place.

IA: Well, you typed up the letters so you had an inside...

Dow: Yes, yeah, yeah, you would, but I always thought, well, if I see, and you had certain people that you kind of look to, the vice president or something, if he starts leaving, you know, if you see a run of 'em start, you know, you'll think, well, they're gonna look out for themselves even if they don't tell you.

IA: That's right.

Dow: And they're sitting in on meetings that you don't have anything, knowledge of or anything like that 'cause they used to always had their meeting. I thought, well, if anything starts happening, ..... well, then I'll get out too 'cause I'll know that there's something in the wind. None of 'em ever left because none of 'em ever knew.

IB: Oh, is that right?

Dow: Oh, no, no. We never knew. See, we never knew that, what he was doing although we...

IA: Cappart?

Dow: Mr. Cappart, we knew that he wasn't paying his bills...

IB: Oh, you did?

Dow: Oh, yes. Lots, some of us did. Some of 'em didn't but some of us knew that he wasn't paying his bills and depending upon who you knew and what department that you were associated with or what, if you knew the people in the cashier's office or, you know, that you were friends with them, well, they might mention, well, he was in last night and emptied the till. This morning we didn't have any money to, to, you know...

IB: Start with.

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Dow: Or if you knew one of his secretaries and she'd say, well, the Board of Water and Light was in today but he was right here but we was told to tell 'em that he...

IA: He was gone.

Dow: he was gone. He was in Virginia or he was in Mississippi or something like that, you know, and...

IB: And supplier's bills and ...

Dow: Supplier bills would be coming in and they'd say, well, he'll take care of it when he gets back, you know.

IA: That's no way to run a business.

Dow: No, no...

IB: It's scary being a secretary for someone like that.

Dow: But at the same time, well, at the same time, see, we were, understood that he was a millionaire.

IB: I've read that he was.

Dow: Oh, yes. He had millions of dollars. So we were just under the assumption that, hey, was going to pay, and at the time, we did not know that he was, what he was doing with all of this money. We didn't know what...

IB: What do you think he was doing with it?

Dow: Well, he was taking it and, taking the money out of our company and investing it in his other companies. He had several different companies.

IB: I know he had the mobile home company...

Dow: He had the mobile, he had farm machinery. He had farming country out in Wyoming and through there and then he owned some, a lot of real estate. He was into real estate. He was taking the money here and paying off bills other places, see. No, none of us knew it until we came to work on April the 5th and the doors were locked.

IB: Oh, my God.

Dow: Oh, yes. We never knew it. We never knew it. We never knew it until we came to work and I never will forget, I only lived about three blocks from REO at that time and I'm walking down the street and all of these people are standing out in from of the



administration building. I'm wondering why are all these people standing out, and then the engineering building was right down the hallway, or down the street and I'm saying, why aren't those people going in to work, you know.

IA: Oh, my goodness.

Dow: You know, why are they all...

IA: You must have had this horrible feeling in the pit of your stomach.

Dow: No, no.

IB: Maybe you wondered if there was a fire inside or...

Dow: Well, I didn't know. As I'm walking down the street and walking towards my job from the, well, I lived close ..... walk to work but I'm walking down the street, there down Washington Avenue and I'm, why is this crowd of people out there in front. Why aren't they going in. Well, it was, it was April, it was the spring of the year so you're thinking, well, it's nice out, was quite common to see people standing out in front with a cup of coffee or something like that in the spring of the air, if it was a nice day, you know, and it was nice that day. But that was too many people and then, as you get there closer, you see the chains on the door. You know something has happened and, of course, you're looking at the chains on the door and you say, why, and there's this big...

IA: Notice.

Dow: sign on the door there.

IB: What did it say?

Dow: Ah, just closed for, it didn't say...

IB: Like till further notice or something?

Dow: Further notice or something like that there. Report tomorrow or something...

IB: What did you all do then?

Dow: Well, we just all stood around there and talked and we didn't really know what was going on 'cause there was no bankruptcy then. It was just, just closed. We didn't know what to think and so I guess we probably just, it's really hard to remember but as I say, I think we

just, oh, a day off. Great, you know. Come back tomorrow. I think it was like, come back tomorrow or something like that.

IA: Was there anything in the paper that day?

Dow: Oh, yes. Oh, yeah.

IA: Then you knew?

Dow: Yeah, then, yeah, then as I say, my scrapbook, ..... my scrapbook which I was kind of lookin' through yesterday. Very discouraging, you know, as I went through 'cause I saved all of the scraps. In fact, I still got 'em, you know, I still got ..... anything we get from the bankruptcy court or anything like that, I stick that in there.

IB: So you went back, say the next day and...

Dow: Probably the next day...

IB: Whenever it was you went back, it was still locked?

Dow: Oh, yes. Yeah, oh, yeah.

IB: Were you ever brought in and told what was happening?

Dow: No, no, no. We was never, that was it. That was it, yeah. We were allowed back in there later on to clean out our desk and...

IB: Well, I suppose bankruptcy officials or whatever, standing about?

IA: Supervising?

Dow: No, there wasn't anybody.

IA: Wasn't there really?

Dow: No, in fact, that's why none of us can figure out why didn't we, we didn't take so much, why didn't we take a lot of stuff. Instead, we left so much stuff. People were walking out of there, now we know, with type, people what were more brazen and one thing another, we walking out of there with typewriters and calculators and things like that there. They just walked out but, in fact, our girl's club stuff, oh, we had several pieces of our girl's club, our china and different things that we just left. We expected to come back. We only went in and cleaned out our desk, taking our personal, 'cause they told us to come in there and clean out our desk, take our personal things, only our personal things out of there. So, we went in and we cleaned out our desks and took our personal things but we

still, all of us, left a lot of stuff that, 'cause we really figured we'd be back. You know, we didn't expect...

IB: Just another one of these change overs and...

Dow: Yeah, it was, we just figured, because, we figured it would just be, wouldn't be a short time at all and then they'd, somebody would buy us and we'd be back in business. So, a lot of stuff we left there. There was a lot of coats, shoes, oh, different things, radios and, you know, personal things that you carry, that you have in your office there that you just don't take home.

IA: That's right.

Dow: You know...

IB: What do you think ever happened to things like the china in the girl's club and...

Dow: Oh, they all went into the trash.

IB: Oh!

Dow: Oh, yeah.

IB: Those would be collector's items now.

Dow: Oh, they definitely would, yeah, yeah.

IA: Well, the whole clubhouse should of been a museum.

Dow: Oh, the clubhouse should have been saved, yeah.

IB: ..... feel pretty bad about that, too, and I didn't even work there but...

Dow: I remember some, and I see 'em in antique shows now, they're little green vases, they were little green flower vases...

IB: Little glass ones?

Dow: Little glass, they used to have green ones, you know, but ah, our girl's club used to, we bought up several hundred of these little vases and then when somebody was ill or something like that we would get the flowers and take 'em to the, put 'em in, take 'em to the hospital. I see those vases now, \$5 or so in antique places where we paid, probably gave 'em 50 cents for, you know, 'cause we bought up a bunch of 'em. We left 'em all there. They all went into, when the clubhouse went down, those were there and different things, different things that were left there. So many, many things that we should of

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saved, you know, pictures in frames that were, pictures on the wall, beautiful paintings that were on the wall were left. Some of those, some of them, some, different things were put in the auction. They had a big auction sale. A lot of different things were put in the auction sale.

IB: Furniture, I suppose, desks...

Dow: Furniture and stuff like that but there was many, many things that, of value, that were gone.

IB: We've got two chairs, two or three folding chairs. I think they're back in the archives room now that came from the clubhouse, the old wooden folding chairs.

Dow: The old wooden, folding, um, hum.

IB: And they've got a little plaque on the back saying they're from the REO Clubhouse and they were donated, I got a phone call one day from a, the Pentecost Church, I think, on the southside and said, we're remodeling. We've got enough money to buy new chairs. We've got two that came from the REO Clubhouse. Would you like them?

Dow: Oh, yeah!

IB: I said, yes!

IA: Probably, you know, a whole book could be written about how they got from the REO Clubhouse to that church.

Dow: Yes, to that church.

IB: You know, there's a story in everything.

Dow: Oh, yeah. There was a story in every, well, when I think back of some, all those things that, oh, we just, they're just gone. It really makes you sick.

IB: Yeah, it does.

Dow: Different things...

IB: I guess that clubhouse represented so much of everyone's lives, that's the thing that makes it ...

Dow: It makes, not just the people that worked there. There was people outside of Lansing that, you know, went to the dances, the charity balls there. Well, they had several, the clubhouse, they rented the clubhouse. Many different clubs rented it.

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IA: Oh, used it, I see.

Dow: Yes, used it. The boy scouts, the girl scouts, several weddings were performed there...

IB: Oh?

Dow: Big, oh, yes, several big weddings.

IA: So it's like a community center.

Dow: Yes.

IB: It would have been the civic center if it'd stayed, wouldn't it?

IA: Yes.

Dow: I wonder if Vern Hyatt, Vern Hyatt was our custodian for the clubhouse. Vern could go on for hours.

IB: Is he living in Lansing?

Dow: No, he lives in Webberville.

IB: In Webberville. Let me see if we can find this man.

IA: Yeah, really.

Dow: Now, Vern has, I may have his address and all, too, but I know Fern Fla.... has his...

IB: Okay, okay.

Dow: I know that she does.

IB: Great.

Dow: She has his address. We've been out, he has several pieces of, well, I should say pictures. I don't know what all Vern has got. God only knows what he stole, took out of there.

IB: Well, it was either that or it ended up...

Dow: But he was custodian of the clubhouse for...

IB: A long time?

Dow: Ah, huh. Several years. I don't know. I, I would probably say 30, 40 years.

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IA: Oh, my goodness. He goes back.

Dow: Oh, he goes back.

IA: Alright, we ought to find him.

IB: Oh, definitely.

Dow: He's a card to talk to.

IA: 'Cause we're, I'm very interested in the early years, too, from the '20s and '30s.

Dow: Yeah, he, he worked for, he worked for several so if you do, take your recording 'cause Vern'll go on for hours.

IA: Great. We love that.

IB: That's wonderful.

Dow: Yeah, but it was, but I really enjoyed my time there.

IB: I think you did.

Dow: I was sorry to see that it ended.

IA: When you, when you worked at REO and then also later at Oldsmobile, did you live down in Lansing?

Dow: I've always lived in Lansing.

IA: Downtown Lansing?

Dow: Yeah.

IA: Did you have a house or did you and your husband rent an apartment or...

Dow: We rented an apartment.

IA: Okay, downtown Lansing?

Dow: Well, we rented, no, we rented...

IA: Moved around?

Dow: Moved around, different parts of Lansing, yeah. We now own our own house.

IA: You have a house now?

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Dow: Oh, yes. Oh, yeah.

IA: On Moores River Drive.

Dow: Yeah, we have rentals and we have houses because we're both retired now.

IB: Did you realized any benefits from your retirement? I mean, I know he took the money out of the retirement, the pension funds, but did you, were you able to...

Dow: What, the only thing that we were, we got was awarded through this government, the PG...

IA: Yes, somebody mentioned that to us.

Dow: The PG...

IA: Pension Restoration Fund or something like that. Who told, Art Fram told us that.

Dow: Art Fram, yeah.

IB: Yeah, I think he did.

IA: He said it's very small though.

Dow: Very small, oh, yes.

IB: ..... percentage.

Dow: Yes, like after, after 25 years there, all I get is \$112.

IA: A month?

Dow: A month, yes.

IA: I mean, it's better than nothing but...

Dow: Oh, it's better than nothing...

IA: certainly not what you would have otherwise.

Dow: but it's, it's that, they came in with that government, that, it's a protection agen, a protection...

IA: He gave us the letters.

Dow: PG...

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IB: I'll have to listen to my tape again...

IA: Yeah.

IB: where he told us about that.

Dow: It may be in some of those papers there, that I got there. It's PGCI or something like that, government pension, no. Pension government something or other.

IB: That's okay...

Dow: In case of, of people, companies going into bankruptcy, it's taken over by the federal government.

IA: Right.

Dow: And you don't get, you don't get any cost of living raises or anything like that.

IA: It's just a flat...

Dow: It's just a flat and that's it. Now, a lot of people, they said that you had to have 10 years in there. A lot of people, they have taken a lump sum rather than draw it out once ever month.

IA: Oh, that's right. We heard about that, too.

Dow: Yeah, some people have been offered...

IB: I think ..... talked about that.

Dow: Yeah, have been offered, sometimes they get in contact with them, other people have taken a lump sum rather than draw it out.

IB: Draw it out.

IA: Whatever is best for you.

Dow: Whatever is best. I prefer to take mine once a month, my husband and I both.

IB: And you know that's coming in.

Dow: Now, my husband only gets \$90 a month.

IB: It's a percentage but it's no where near what you would have...



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Dow: Oh, no, no. At the time, at the time, we should have been getting, at the time of this, back in '85 had we retired at that time, back in '75, 1975, the pension was \$800 a month.

IB: So you can see the difference right there.

Dow: Now see, that was what Oldsmobile was paying. We had the same contract that Oldsmobile.

IB: Oh, you did?

Dow: Now, yes, we had the same, basically the same contract. REO was, that was back in '75, if you retired you would get \$800 a month. That's what Oldsmobile was getting. Oldsmobile now gets, \$1,800, \$1,800 to \$2,000 a month when they retire.

IB: That's a lot.

Dow: That's a lot, yeah. About, the average worker over there at Oldsmobile gets a \$2,000...

IA: I think that's more than professors get when we ...

Dow: Yeah, \$1,800 to \$2,000.

IB: I don't get anything.

Dow: But ah....

IB: I've heard, too, I've heard and several of the men we've talked to have talked about suicides and .....

Dow: Oh, yes. We've had, we've had seven different people commit suicide.

IA: Seven?

Dow: Seven different people commit suicide.

IB: Due...

Dow: Indirectly...

IB: To, to what happened?

Dow: To what happened, that they couldn't see their way to go on.

IB: Their whole life was kind of just...

Dow: Well, yes.

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IB: down the drain.

Dow: They, they...

IB: Everything they've worked for.

Dow: and we've had several, several deaths due, I'm sure, this had a lot to do with it.

IB: Indirectly.

Dow: Indirectly, it was related to that, that there, the stress and not being able to, well, especially, and most of these people were all supervisors. I mean, they weren't union so see, they weren't getting anything.

IA: Yeah, they had no protection.

Dow: They had no protection whatsoever.

IB: Hum, I hadn't thought about that before.

IA: Yeah, somebody mentioned that to us also. I can't remember which one now.

Dow: Yeah, they weren't getting anything and their insurance and everything was taken away from 'em.

IB: After that day, when you went down and it was padlocked and the next day it was still locked, did they, were any of you workers ever called together somewhere for a meeting and this was explained to you that this was, we're out of business. You're out a job. You will be getting something or...

Dow: Not that I remember. No, just...

IA: Just read it in the paper.

Dow: Just read it in the paper. We just read it in the paper. I don't remember ever having, like you say, being called back, no. We had several meetings before and between times, every time a new company took over, we always had an assembly after work or something like that, where they poured out the beer or the pop or coffee or so on and so forth and introducing the new bosses.

IB: Here we go again.

Dow: Yeah, here we go again. We had several of them and things were looking good or things were bad at the time but we cut back here but we'll make a go of it. No, I don't remember of ever going back.

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Maybe somebody could jog my memory but I don't remember of ever going back. I went back several times and talked to, now the sales department was kept open.

IB: Oh, to finish up what was still under...

Dow: To finish and for quite a long time. Who worked in that sales department?

IA: ..... Rankin.

IB: Oh, Rankin was in export sales.

Dow: He was export sales. No, this was, I can remember going back and sittin' there but you know, I can't think who I went back, 'cause I can remember sitting there the day that they went to court. I can remember the last time that they went to court. There was about, I wish I could remember who it was but there was about five of us and the attorney that we had representing REO was downstairs and he came upstairs and he told us that he was going to Grand Rapids to the court and he said, don't worry. I have a buyer.

IA: Oh, wow.

Dow: And he says, I have a buyer. This was the last day that they went to court. He says, I have a buyer and he said, so don't worry. He says, we'll be back in business. I'll call ya and I think the court was like 10 o'clock, you know, and we sat there till 1 o'clock waiting for his telephone call from Grand Rapids, saying that everything had gone through, that he had the buyer and I don't know who it was, that was gonna come through and buy, it was all...

IA: It never happened.

Dow: Never happened and never was.

IB: Oh, it never was?

Dow: Oh, never was.

IB: That was a lie to start with.

Dow: No, it was just a lie.

IA: Oh.

Dow: It was just a lie, just a lie.

IB: This was an attorney, that was REO's attorney but this was obviously Cappart's man.

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Dow: Yeah, yeah, well...

IB: And this was told, to tell all the rest of you to keep you calm or something.

Dow: Well, there was a bunch, we were, there was a, I think there were five of us. See, the place was closed but we could get in and I can't remember who, I can't remember who was in that office. Somebody, one of the girls was there and Will Johnson was probably there. Will Johnson was there. He was sales manager at the time. I think he was there. I don't know where Will is now. God only knows but his secretary was there and she would take any incoming calls, you know, and everything like that 'cause they were still ..... if anybody was calling for trucks or, of course, they were always calling for the latest, the sales or the vendors or the suppliers, you know, or these different companies that were ordering trucks were still hoping that they could get their trucks, you know, they could put their order in, in still.

IB: I just can't...

Dow: Oh, yes.

IB: ..... of this thing happening and how far reaching and...

Dow: Oh, it was all over.

IB: A catastrophe.

Dow: Oh, calls, I can remember sitting there, you know, this is terrible but I cannot remember who the secretary was. I can't remember who I went in there to see. Somebody will have to jog my memory.

IB: But you could go in?

Dow: Oh, yeah, we could walk in and out any time we want. So, I only lived a couple of blocks from REO at that time. So, I would walk over there ..... to see what was going on, you know, and ah, but I remember that day very well, very distinctly, of him, the attorney saying, now don't, there was more than myself. There was probably a half a dozen of us sittin' there 'cause people would drift in and out all day long trying to find out the latest news going on or if there was anything, you know, that they knew, anything like that 'cause our spirits were pretty low by that time, you know, and ah, so, now, I can remember him saying, don't worry, you know, I've got a buyer and we'll be back in business so we're thinkin', oh boy, good. We're sitting there waiting for his phone call. About 1 o'clock, we finally decided we...

IA: You realized, yeah...

IB: That you'd been duped again.

Dow: There wasn't, there wasn't going to be any phone call, that we'd been, and then we read it in the paper, of course, the next day or, not, I think then, at that time we were getting a paper twice a day. Remember when we used to get a paper twice a day?

IA: Get an early edition .....

IB: Yeah, I do remember that.

Dow: But, it wasn't about, ready to happen 'cause most always the paper would say, well, the REO's gone. The REO's almost gone or it's not gone, there's still hope, you know, and so on and so forth.

IB: One of the gentlemen we talked to and then some papers that Mr. Rankin gave me, oh, that's where I got, from something I was reading that he loaned me, that the truck sales were up.

Dow: Oh, yes!

IB: And it wasn't as if, you know, sales were down, nobody wanted to order those products, they were up.

Dow: Oh, yeah. We had more orders on the books the day that we went out for bankruptcy than we'd ever had in the history of REO.

IB: Isn't that incredible?

Dow: And people were calling in begging, put their names on the list. I'll take one. I'll take 10. I'll take as many trucks as I can get because our trucks sold for \$50,000 to \$100,000 a piece.

IA: Oh, my God.

Dow: At that time.

IB: They did? Oh, they did?

Dow: Oh, yes. Our trucks sold for \$50,000 at that time and these different vendors of these different companies were ordering, I'll take one, I'll take two, I'll take whatever I can get where they would ordinarily order just one or two. Put me on your list. They wanted to make sure that they were on that list, that when we went back to building trucks, they were gonna get it, see.

IA: Wow.

Dow: They were gonna be on that list for those trucks and as Ed said, yes, we had more trucks on the order at that time. But, nobody could buy

us the way Cappart had us set up. He, you couldn't come in and buy the business 'cause you had to buy the business. That was one business. You had to buy the land. That was another. You had to buy the buildings. That, so you had, you had the business, you had to pay \$300,000. Then you had the buildings which were no good at all but you had to have the buildings. They were another \$100,000. Then you had the land that you had to buy. See, he had taken this, all this property and split it into different companies. So nobody could come in and say, well, I'll give you \$100,000 for your business or a million dollars or whatever because Cappart had split it all into several different companies.

IA: Dividing contracts.

Dow: Dividing, taxes, and taxes...

IB: Can you imagine even trying to untangle that mess.

Dow: Oh, yes.

IA: Yeah, yeah, well, that's .....

Dow: Yes, that's right there.

IB: That's another reason he did it probably.

Dow: Yes. You buy this, you buy, you, he had it all broken down into, and if you will notice in his paper there, his, he did that, the same thing with his mobile company, mobile business. Every, every little corner that he could take a hunk out of for tax reasons or otherwise, that's what he did. So nobody could come in and buy us. It was impossible...

IB: Well, that explains something that I've always wondered.

Dow: to come up with that much money, that would come up with that much money, you know.

IB: And then, on top of that, they would have to, most people would have to come in and tear those buildings down and put up new ones 'cause those were a .....

Dow: Well, those buildings were, those buildings were, they were adequate to build the trucks and things like that there. Those people had worked in those buildings so they were willing to go along with that there and as you made money, but you had to, you had to have people that put the money back into the company, not take it out to take it somewhere else.

IA: That's right, you have to reinvest.

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Dow: You had to reinvest. There was many, many people, in fact, at one time, several people were trying to get together and buy the business.

IA: Yeah, we heard about that....

IB: Oh, .....

Dow: Yeah, tried to, employees buying it but they couldn't because they couldn't come, it was impossible to come up with the amount of money that he wanted to buy these different parts.

IA: Parts.

IB: Even if you'd had the money, just the legal tangle...

Dow: The legal tangle of...

IB: Of trying to...

Dow: Yes.

IB: .....daunting.

Dow: Yes, it was terrible. Well, it really, it really hurt.

IA: We've heard that from everybody.

Dow: Yeah.

IA: Absolutely.

Dow: It did certainly...

IA: From the, you know, all levels.

Dow: Yes.

IA: Every level.

Dow: But as I said, no, not even the, not even the supervisors themselves had any inkling that that was what was going to happen.

IB: Now, that's the first time I'd known, have heard that. That is so interesting.

Dow: Yeah.

IB: Sad.

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Dow: Very sad.

IB: But imagine how he was able to keep everybody from knowing, I mean, just by not being there, I suppose.

Dow: Just by that, not being there.

IA: Yeah.

Dow: Mildred his...

IB: What a slick...

Dow: Yeah, his right hand.

IA: Oh, yeah. We heard about her, too.

Dow: Oh, yeah.

IB: Oh, what do you know about Mildred? I'm interested in .....

Dow: I don't know anything about her.

IA: We've heard a lot of gossip about that.

Dow: Yeah, you hear a lot of gossip. Yeah, you hear a lot of gossip.

IB: I've heard that she was the hatchet man, that when somebody got fired, she was the one that...

IA: Call them in.

Dow: She did it. Yeah, well, she did all that, yes.

IB: Plus I heard that she was, had bodyguards.

Dow: Well, she was the one that was there, yeah. Well, she was the one that was there. See, he never was there and when he did come there, it would be at night, you know...

IB: Oh, really