

Isadore Goldberg
Narrator

Rhoda G. Lewin
Interviewer

May 12, 1976
Minneapolis, MN

Isadore Goldberg **-IG**
Rhoda Lewin **-RL**

IG: My name is Izzy Goldberg. I was born here. My folks were married right here in Minneapolis. My folks came from Lithuania in 1896. No, my mother must have come before 1896; she was married here in 1896, on Lyndale and Eighth Avenue North, in a house there right across the street from Forest Court.

RL: What was Forest Court?

IG: Forest Court was a long tenement right off of Lyndale and Eighth, just toward Bradford Avenue.

RL: How many families lived there?

IG: Oh, there must have been maybe ten... just a two story tenement right behind the bunch of stores that were at Lyndale and Eighth Avenue North. They were married there and my older brother, Max, was born in 1898. Of course he was delivered in the home; my mother never had any hospital care at all, in those earlier years. I was born in 1900 and my brother Morris, the dentist, was born in 1902. And I have a sister, Frances, that was born in about 1904 or '05, and Hymie, the engineer, was born about 1907, and then Harold... you know Harold, he was at the Emanuel Cohen Center... he was a social worker, he just retired... he was born about 1909 or 1910. And we had a baby sister, Adele. She was 11 when she died in 1923, so she was born about 1912. She died of bacterial endocarditis in 1923, the year I was an intern. I was born on Fourth Street, in a house across the street from where the Bryant School used to be. That's right near where Napco Auto Parts have their property now, I guess. Anyhow, I don't remember that place. I understand when I was one or two years of age, my father and my uncle, Mr. Lurie, bought a lumber camp up at Lake Nebagamon, Wisconsin. They were there for about a year but they didn't make any money, so they came back to the cities.

RL: Now, the whole family didn't go...

IG: The whole family, they just went. I don't know the details, but apparently they didn't make a go of it, and both families, we and my uncle and aunt, the Luries, we moved back to Minneapolis at that time. I don't remember this. The first thing that I remember must have been 1906 when I started grade school. At that time we lived at 1125 Emerson Avenue North. My folks paid \$12 a month rent and had four kids already. I didn't even know my given name until my aunt brought me to Grant School and gave me my name of Isadore. Before that I went by my Jewish name, Yisroel. I didn't know my name was Isadore until then, when my aunt put that moniker on me.

RL: And that was a detached house? Or was it a duplex or a flat?

IG: Mr. Libman owned the two houses. It was a single house with no indoor plumbing, no central heating, nothing at all. In 1908 that house burned, right before Pesach. Then the family had to move in a hurry, and we moved to a four family flat on Dupont and Sixth Avenue North. We didn't live there very long, but we rented that until, still in 1908, my folks bought their first home, for \$1,800. That's what they paid for that house!

RL: And where was that?

IG: It was at 1201 Sixth Avenue North... it's now Olson Highway... Fremont and Sixth. That house doesn't stand there any more. It didn't have any central heating. We had a cellar... some steep steps down... my mother kept her potatoes down there... and we had a kitchen stove and an isinglass hard coal stove in the living room. We had two bedrooms upstairs. The only heat we had in our bedroom was what went through a register in the ceiling from the downstairs. I remember in the winter-time, I just hated to go to bed because it was so cold up there! We used to get undressed in a hurry and sleep in our underwear, with a heavy feather blanket over us. My older brother Max and I slept together up there. And when you got up in the morning you hated to get out of bed, because it was so cold. But we managed, and we lived there until 1915, when my folks bought their second home at 712 Elwood Avenue North. I used to go to cheder and I used to have to take violin lessons. I remember old Mr. Bjorkman used to come to the house for fifty cents, for my brother Max and I together, for an hour's lesson, and he used to walk; he was a cripple. So I went to cheder and took music lessons, and from the time I was 12 years old I started carrying a paper route.

RL: You had a regular paper route?

IG: We went to Plymouth Avenue and Fifth Street to get our papers at Bistodeau's Grocery. Max and I had a route together. And later on we took a route downtown. It was Western Avenue... it's now Glenwood... from Seventh Street to Twelfth Street, and from Hennepin to Glenwood. We carried that route, and I remember putting our wagon on a streetcar to take it downtown; we used to get our papers right at the Tribune alley there on

Fourth Street and Marquette. We used to get 45 cents a month for daily and Sunday paper. Forty-five cents a month! If we made \$10 a month we did well. We had in that area a lot of deadbeats. A lot of people would move out, and we wouldn't know. We'd come the end of the month to collect for the paper and they'd moved away, and we'd lose that, naturally. I never had time to play. We played a little bit on the street, a little baseball, or something, but nothing else. We didn't have any time. Then, in 1915, when I graduated... when we moved to Olson Highway... Is this what you want, or is it just too detailed?

RL: No, no, it's just wonderful.

IG: When we moved to Sixth Avenue North... it's Olson Highway now... we transferred over to the Harrison School and I graduated from the Harrison School in 1912. I was only 12 years of age when I graduated the eighth grade.

RL: How did you do that so fast?

IG: I kept skipping. I skipped three years, as a kid.

RL: How many children were there in a classroom?

IG: Oh, I imagine there was around 30 or 40.

RL: So when you skipped a grade you went to a different teacher in a different classroom...

IG: Sure, a different teacher. I skipped a whole year one time... I forget what grade... from grade 4 or grade 5 or something like that. Anyway, I finished there, and I was 12 years of age when I started going to North High School in 1912. North High burned down the following summer, just before the end of the school year in 1913. Then, for my sophomore year in high school, we had to go to the old Central High School, which preceded the new Central that's there now on Thirty-fourth and Fourth Avenue, which was just completed that year, so the old Central High School happened to be vacant at that time. I don't know what their intentions were to do with it, whether they intended to build a vocational school then or not, but we North students went there for one year. They built the new North High that year, in 1913, and we came back there in '14. I finished North High in 1916, and as a matter of fact, we are going to have our 60th reunion next May 26! It was in the paper the other day. So I finished high school in 1916, and all that time I carried a paper route. I didn't go on much with my music. I lost my violin in that North High fire, and who could afford to buy another violin? So (laughing) I was through with my music training. When I was in high school I had no idea what I wanted to do. I was just a kid. I happened to be able to absorb what they gave me, but I had no idea what to do, it was just to go out and make a living. In my North High annual... Charlie Johnson

happened to be the editor of our Polaris, and he was later the sports editor of the Tribune... under my name they put "a dentist in the making." Why? Because I said I was going to take dentistry. You see, for my folks, my mother especially, the idea of having a doctor in the family, that was the pinnacle of success for parents, to have their children grow up as doctors. My brother Max, who was older than I, finished in January '16, and we were both going to start the University at the same time in September of '16. In those days you didn't start the University twice a year. You could, but the prevailing method was to start 'em all in September. So Max was going to take dentistry, and just before going over to school to register, my mother happened to mention why should both be dentists, one should become a doctor. (Laughing) I had no inclination and I didn't know I would be any good in it, and another thing, the tuition in the academic school, SLA (Science, Literature and the Arts), was cheaper than going to dentistry. I think my year of tuition in SLA was maybe \$20 a year, or \$40 a year, possibly, where dentistry would be maybe double that. So when my mother made that statement, it was up to me to take pre-med. Going into dental school you didn't have much chance to work on the outside. It was all day. But in SLA, taking 16 or 20 credits, I could work at the Tribune, where I worked in the mailing room after I finished my route. I worked in the afternoon, stuffing papers and stamping papers and wrapping papers, so I was able to make a few dollars.

RL: Do you remember what you were paid for that?

IG: Oh, yes. We usually got 17-1/2 cents a thousand to put the magazine and rotogravure sections into the comics. Those were printed elsewhere and they were shipped to the Tribune and we used to stuff them during the week. They printed the comics section ahead of time. I used to work whenever I had time; I could go down there twelve o'clock at night, if I wished.

RL: And how fast could you stuff them?

IG: I was awfully fast. I used to do 3,000 in an hour. Just like a machine. 3,000 an hour, so I made 52-1/2 cents an hour doing that. I think I did maybe 30,000 in a week. Whenever I had time, I'd go down there and work. One day, I did 30,000 of those in one day -- 30,000 in one day! -- so I made \$5.25! Then I worked on the afternoon run bundling papers, tying up bundles for the news kids. I got 50 cents for that, so I made \$5.75! I felt like a millionaire, I had made so much money! That was when I was about 15 years old. So anyway, I worked down at the Tribune. I took pre-med, and I'd had two years' pre-med when I got into medical school in 1918. And in 1918, during the war, they put us in the students' army training corps. They weren't avoiding the draft... the medical students, and the engineering students, and so on, they wanted them to complete their education. So in October, 1918, I was ushered into the U.S. Army, put on a uniform, and I got \$30 a month, a dollar a day. That was what they paid the privates in the army in World War I! I got in October 12, I think it was, the Armistice came in November, and I was discharged in December. I was in for two months! (Laughing). But I'm a veteran of World War I through that. And of course that helped me, because it didn't allow me to

live at home where we lived then, at 712 Elwood Avenue. When we were in the army we had to live at... it's now, I think, the International Harvester Building in Midway. That was our barracks. At that time it was called the Overland Motor Company building. They had a lieutenant march us to school in the morning, march us back for chow, march us back for school, and so on. We studied at the University, did our studying there. And that helped me, 'cause I got the \$30 a month, and then I got a \$200 educational bonus, and then the government gave us a dollar a day bonus, too. So, I got \$30 a month (laughing) for pay... I got a dollar a day bonus, so I got another \$30 there... that's \$60, and the state gave us a \$200 educational bonus! That was really a lifesaver to me then, because we had nothing. It paid my tuition at the medical school... \$180 a year... which I know my folks couldn't afford.

RL: What business was your father in?

IG: My father was on the road for my uncle, Berman Bros. Hide & Fur. He'd go out and buy up hides and furs from the farmers. He'd go to Canada, North Dakota, Montana, and so on, and buy and ship them here to the Berman brothers.

RL: That was about the time the hide and fur business really went bad... about 1920?

IG: They had a depression in 1920, I think it was. Then they came back. And then they lost everything later on when the market went kablooey. The market went way down! I remember, as I said before, when my Dad made \$12 a week. He worked for Berman Brothers all the time, first as a laborer, nothing more, and then afterwards they put him on the road. So that bonus money helped me with medical school. It paid a full year's tuition. And then I worked at the Tribune, stuffing papers, just in my spare time, up until I was an intern. I never went to a dance, I never took a girl out. I didn't know what it was. I couldn't afford it.

RL: How many years was medical school?

IG: Two years pre-med and four years medicine, and then one year internship. It took seven years before I got my M.D. in '23, 53 years ago this summer. So that was that. I finally got through medical school. I got good grades... I made the honorary medical society, in spite of all I was doing (laughter)... and in spite of not being too much interested, not knowing that I wanted it at all. I did very well with it. Beryl Berman was the first girl I ever took out in my life, that I voluntarily called up and asked to go out with me, and that was after I was a doctor. And why did I do it? Because I was a doctor, I got stuck for a Talmud Torah dinner dance ticket. It cost me \$5 and I didn't want to see \$5 going to waste, so I finally got up enough gumption to call a girl up. And I didn't take another girl out until the next Talmud Torah dinner dance! I was a shy kid, and I was afraid of women! I think that was one reason I took a residency in obstetrics and gynecology, because I was afraid of women! I wasn't really afraid of them, I just was too shy. So anyway, that takes me through medical school. Then I took a year's residency in

obstetrics and gynecology at the General Hospital... I spent almost three years at the General Hospital altogether, interning and residency... and in 1924 I started practicing. My first office was at 301 Physicians and Surgeons Building, where I paid \$70 a month rent, but at first, I didn't pay \$70. I forget what I did pay, but I just subleased an office for half days from another doctor, where he was in the hospital every morning. I didn't have any money. I had nothing. And it wasn't like today, where a young doctor can go out and make himself a good living. You had to struggle for it, and there were plenty of months when I didn't have money to pay my rent. After a year, Dr. Ehrenberg moved out of the office to take his residency in obstetrics and gynecology, so I took over his room in that same office. Then was when my expense was \$70 a month. All I had to do was furnish my one room; that included the office, the telephones, and the girls. We had an x-ray in the office, and a little operating room in the office that we could use, and I got a desk, an examining table, and a few little supplies, and that's all I needed. It didn't take very much. And there were still months I didn't have money to pay that rent! That was in 1925-26, and then when we got into the Depression, in the '30s, we used to sit around that office and do nothing, practically nothing. I used to play cards with Dr. Lee... Dr. Maxeiner was in our office and he was fairly busy... and Dr. Frank Hirschfield, Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Alexander. Dr. Ehrenberg had moved out already. There were a bunch of us all together, as I said, and I was the only Jew in the outfit. It was a struggle. When I got through with the General Hospital I took a job there... I had it even when I was a resident... the night emergency, where I went out on emergency calls with the emergency ambulance. Dave Eisenstadt, who is now dead, he and I split, 'cause I couldn't work at the hospital all day and then be on call all night, so every other night we were on call for the emergency ambulance. Between us we got \$50 a month, so I got \$25 a month. In 1924, after I finished my residency, I bought my first car for \$900 on payments, an Essex, so until I got started I kept the job at the General night ambulance. I used to park my car on Fourth Avenue South and Sixth Street, right near the General Hospital, while I was working. Then, just before I'd started to practice, one day I was standing in front of my home at 712 Elwood. They had oiled the streets, and then it rained, and every car that would cross the street over there where Max Shapiro used to live, on that curve, every car that would come there, they wouldn't appreciate that there was oil on the street, and the car would swerve over and hit the curbing. So I was standing out there... the rain had stopped and I was talking to a Mandelstam boy who lived next door to us, and we see this cab coming. I says, "Now, son, let's go across and catch that cab or it's going to..." Anyway, that cab swerved against the curbing, swerved all the way around, and hit another one! Who was in that cab but Rabbi Silver's daughter! I was a doctor already, but I had no office, I didn't know how to practice, but I went down there and just examined her. She wasn't hurt badly... banged up a little bit, nothing very much. So the next morning when I got through working I went into the Yellow Cab... their building was on Fourth Avenue South and Sixth Street, two blocks from the General Hospital, that was the Yellow Cab garage and office... so like the simpleton that I was (laughing), I go in there and ask them, "I witnessed this accident and this woman was hurt. Do you want me to take care of this patient?" They didn't have any doctor, so I took care of her. Through that, I got acquainted with the president of the company... Dave Sachs was the owner... and Claude Masters

was the claim man, and McGraw, I think, was another claim man... Anyhow, through that I got started with them and I took a job with them for \$50 a month to be their Yellow Cab doctor. \$50 a month!

RL: What did that job involve, for \$50?

IG: I instituted a system they still use today. I said, "Now, every time anybody's cab has an accident, take the injured party right down to..." I was on the staff of the Asbury Hospital, as it was called in those days... now the Methodist is there... I said, "Bring them down to the Asbury Hospital and call me." And the claim adjuster, he'd come down there and I just would examine them, and that way they'd settle a lot of cases before they had time to think about it. A lot of small injuries, they'd give them \$10 to sign a release. They still use that system today, and I started that. And through that Yellow Cab job, I did get other business. The personnel around there who knew of me... most of them were poor people, so I didn't get too much, although as I like to say, the president of the Yellow Cab Company, Jack Daly, I delivered him! His father was a starter at the Radisson Hotel... that old man is probably older than I am, though I don't know if he is living today...but this kid that's the president now of the Yellow Cab Company is Daly's kid. I delivered two kids for the Dalys. And when they had the smallpox epidemic in 1924, I vaccinated all of them. I got business. I didn't go into obstetrics and gynecology. I did general practice right from the go. I took the year residency, but I never finished. I could have had a three-year residency... Litzenberg offered me a three-year residency... but I thought I had to go out and make a buck. So I kept that Yellow Cab job until the streetcar company bought out all the cab companies. They were trying to corral the transportation business, and they bought out the Red Top, the Yellow and the Premier Cab... there were three different cab companies... and at that time they decided to keep Dr. George Eitel... he was the doctor for the Red Top Cab... so they kept him. That's why I had that job for three years. And then I got married in 1926.

RL: You met another girl?

IG: Well, she was the third girl I took out in my life. And how did I marry her? I don't think I'd ever have gotten married if it wasn't my brother was marrying her sister and I was going to be the best man and she was the maid of honor, and so we were thrown together, and I got up the courage to ask her to marry me. That was the story. And of course the rest of it is modern. (Laughter)

RL: Well, let's see, that takes you into the Depression.

IG: The Depression. I didn't have money to pay my rent. I used to deliver babies in the home for \$25... if I got paid. My fee for a house call was \$3... if I got paid. An office call was a dollar or two. When Dr. George Gordon took over the Talmud Torah and gave up his practice, I bought out his good will.

RL: How did you go about that?

IG: At that time I was still in the Medical Arts Building and George was officing with Dr. Charlie Rauch, the dentist. I gave Dr. Gordon \$1,000 for his good will, and he sent out a letter to his patients saying that I was taking over. He just quit when he took over the Talmud Torah. I took over whatever he had in his office. I still have his old microscope. I moved into that office, but that didn't pan out too good, so I was there for a year or two, I guess. And then when the Medical Arts Building was built, in 1929 I think it was, my brother Max and I took an office together in the Medical Arts Building.

RL: When they paid you did they ever try to pay you with things like chickens, or...

IG: No, no. That was country. That didn't happen in the city. I never ever bartered that way. You sent a bill and you got paid or you didn't get paid. I dare say that at the very minimum I lost, where people didn't pay me, at least 25% of what I put on the books. And I didn't charge very much. I never in my life charged anybody \$10 for a house call, never.

RL: The good old days. In those days were some of the doctors practicing in offices out in the neighborhoods, like on Lyndale?

IG: Oh, yes.

RL: What made you do downtown in the Medical Arts Building and in the Physicians' building?

IG: I don't know. I suppose because I didn't limit myself to obstetrics and gynecology. I already had the Yellow Cab job and I figured I had to be downtown, and if I was going to limit myself to obstetrics and gynecology, I figured I had to be downtown. My brother Max practiced dentistry, and he opened up on Sixth Avenue North and Humboldt. And there was Dr. Groll... he was an old-timer... he was on Sixth Avenue North near Royalston. Of course, Dr. Gordon, he was downtown. And there was Dr. Labofsky, he was on Sixth Avenue North and Bryant. There was old Dr. Theodore Hirschfield, he was somewhere up north on Plymouth, on Girard or Humboldt, or something. There were doctors in almost all the outlying districts all the way through. It was a common thing then.

RL: We hear a lot about antisemitism, like quotas in medical school and all that, in the '30s. Do you remember anything about that?

IG: Well, as a matter of fact, Leo Rigler, who was professor of x-ray and Blanche's cousin, too... said there was, and there was logic to it. I don't say there was no antisemitism. There was antisemitism even in marking. I got a "D" in obstetrics once by Dr. Solhaug. I wouldn't call him an antisemite, but it was just because he wanted to see

his fraternity brothers... there was competition in making the honorary society... so I figured that's the reason he gave me a "D". I know I didn't deserve it, but I wouldn't call it antisemitism. But the quota business, there was a logic to it, because then if Jewish boys had difficulty getting internships, residencies, placements. I mean if you had too many Jews getting through and if they weren't going to be able to do anything... Now even with me, as I say, I was in the top of my class, and the first one to pick the General Hospital as an internship. And I did a good job all the way through as an intern... I was there as junior intern and as a senior intern... and Dr. Liszt was the superintendent, and my senior internship terminated the first of July in 1923, and when it came somewhere, say, around February or March of '23, and I had decided that I was going to take a residency in obstetrics and gynecology, I went to Dr. Liszt and I told him, the year's getting near the end and I'd like to have that residency at the General Hospital in obstetrics and gynecology. They had two residencies, two openings there, and Dr. Liszt told me, "You're the first one to apply." I don't know how much time elapsed, but I didn't hear, I didn't hear, I didn't hear, and finally I went to Dr. Liszt and he says, "I have to accommodate the University." He had an agreement with the University that Dr. Litzenberg at the University had the privilege of putting in a resident. "Okay," I say, "how about number two?" I didn't want a three-year residency, I just wanted the one year at General Hospital. "How about number two?" Well, Dr. Adair, who had practically all the Jewish business in obstetrics in Minneapolis... he and Litzenberg had most of it at that time... he had some arrangement with the General Hospital, where he had an appointment before, and Dr. Proshek was the resident, and then the second year he went in with Dr. Adair in his private office... Adair had that arrangement, where he was going to have somebody working in his office as part of a residency. He was a good tight Scotsman, if there ever was one! I mean I'm sure he benefited by it. So Liszt tells me he doesn't think I'd work... "So he won't have you." So I was burning under the collar and the next morning I waited for Dr. Adair to come in to make rounds. Now, I'm his resident. I said, "I understand you won't let me have this residency. I'm the first one to apply here, and I feel I've done my job and I feel I'm entitled to it." "Oh," he says to me, "I don't think you'd work out in your second year, in my private office." Why? Because I was Jewish, and he had a lot of Jewish business, and he was such a tight Scotsman, I suppose he was afraid that I'd take away some of his business! So I said, "Dr. Adair, I'm not interested in being with you in the second year, but I think I'm entitled to this first year." He backed down, and I got it! Was that antisemitism? He had a Jewish business, so I think it was a practical thing with him. I wouldn't say he was an antisemite. But things like that occurred, and we have a tendency to blame everything onto that they don't like us. I always feel that there are very few non-Jews that wouldn't do the same as happened with Hitler in Germany. If the time came, a lot of our non-Jewish friends would jump on the bandwagon in a hurry! When things are going along smoothly they are fair-weather friends, but let something happen, and they see their way clear. They're not going to be looked down on, and because they won't care whether the Jews look down on them or not, they'll jump right on the bandwagon. I feel that will come here someday too, if conditions are such that will warrant it. It will come.

RL: Then you were on the staff at Asbury Hospital.

IG: Oh, yes. I was on the staff at Asbury, yes. In those days they were tickled to death to have anybody. Even at St. Barnabas, there was no question. Whether you were on the staff or not, you could call up and say, "I want to bring a patient in." And so, what happened to me once at St. Barnabas... later on St. Barnabas was quite an antisemitic place, the powers that be there were anti-Semitic, the doctors... Dr. Diessner was a good Nazi... and you'd see on the bulletin board in the Doctors' Room, if there was something in the newspapers that you could readily recognize that it was a Jewish man had done something wrong, or a man with a beard, you know, and so on, a picture, something that was derogatory, he'd done something criminal, or something like that... they'd post it on the bulletin board, these doctors...on the Doctors' Room bulletin board!

RL: At St. Barnabas?

IG: Right in the open. So once I had a patient in there, in labor, and decided that what I wanted to do was a caesarean section. And they told me no, I've got to have someone on the staff. I took that patient right out of there and took her over to Asbury! And then I stopped coming there. There was a lot of racist feeling over there. Henry Braunstein was on the staff there, though eventually I think he had trouble too, although he was married to a non-Jew. He was distantly related to me. Outside of him, at that time I don't think there was a Jew on the staff! The hospitals that were very good to us were Asbury... St. Mary's was always very fair to us... Catholics... and Eitel, which was not a church-affiliated hospital, they were okay. In those days even Northwestern... at the time they needed us, they accepted us, but it wasn't until quite a long time after those days that a corps of Jews got on the staff at Northwestern.

RL: You say they needed you. Was that during...

IG: The Depression. When the hospitals were empty, they didn't question hardly anything. Just bring in a patient!

RL: And so, then, later in the '30s they began to restrict the Jewish doctors.

IG: Oh, yes. When the Depression was over, that's when the restrictions came in.

RL: When did people start talking about having a Jewish hospital? Were you involved in that? You were, weren't you?

IG: I was there at the time. After all, it was after this thing happened with St. Barnabas... that was part of it, that the Jews were having difficulty at St. Barnabas and Northwestern... Abbott of course had their pediatrics... all pediatricians could go there... Dave Siperstein, Max Seham, they had no difficulty there, but it was still the same

director. Mt. Sinai was opened in '51, so probably this was about '48 or '49.

RL: That was after the war then. How did you happen to go into the service? Did you get drafted, or did you enlist?

IG: No, I enlisted. But here's what happened. In 1943 they had a doctor committee... I think Ed Evans, who just died, was the head of it... who indicated that you're available, you're not necessary, you are necessary, you are not necessary. I mean, he put the names in, and that committee designated which doctors were available for service... weren't "necessary," in other words. If a man was on the teaching staff at the University, or if he was in some small town and there was no other doctor, then the community needed him, he was not available. And I was. And Sol Ehrlich. Bill Gordon was made "available," but he didn't go, but Sam Dworsky, myself, Sol Ehrlich, we were designated! And as long as they said I was available, I went right down and enlisted, the same day I got that letter. I didn't even tell Blanche.

RL: In spite of the fact that you had a wife and two children.

IG: Yeah. Well, I wasn't doing that well, either, so I figured if I wasn't "necessary"... I wasn't that patriotic, but as long as they said I was available for draft, I thought I probably would be, so I sent my name in there, just went down the same day I got the letter. I just enlisted... went right down and enlisted... and I got about six weeks' time to straighten things out. At that time I was officing with Dr. Gingold, practicing with him, and it wasn't difficult.

RL: So, then he took over the practice.

IG: I didn't care. Whatever happened, happened. People went wherever they wanted.

RL: Your wife was telling me that when her sister died your brother and the children came to live with you. I know that a lot more people used to die young, so that was a much more common situation than it is now... to lose a wife, a young mother or a young husband... but did people usually move in together like that?

IG: No. Of course, it was economic, first of all. She had an illness, my brother was broke, he had the two kids. What was he going to do? We happened to be two brothers and two sisters, so it just was logical. And until I went into the service in World War II, they lived with us. At that time, of course, it might not look so good to people to have my brother living with my wife, in the same house (laughing), so that broke up!

RL: To back-track, you said you went to cheder when you were a little boy. Where did you go? That was before the Talmud Torah.

IG: We three boys... the three older ones in the family... went to a private rabbi. It didn't cost very much. I went first to Levinson, a tailor. He was on Lyndale Place. Then, after that, when I. J. Cohen, who is Reuben Berman's grandfather on his mother's side... Reuben Berman and I are cousins, you know... my mother was a Berman, and there's Ephraim Berman and Alexander Berman and Sarah Berman, who used to work for the Jewish World. Sarah Berman's father was a Rabbi... I. J. Cohen, that was her father, and Buddy Cohen's grandfather, too... the Cohen is Buddy Cohen's mother, who is a sister of Sarah Berman. And Anna Cohen was married to Ephraim. Two brothers married two sisters there, too. Anyhow, their father was a rabbi, so we changed from Levinson to Cohen. He had classes in his home on Bryant and Fifth Avenue North.

RL: Were these private lessons, or was there a class?

IG: He had it on the second floor. Hy Lippman used to go there; Hy was one of his students. He had a room on the second floor, with make-shift desks... a table and a wooden plank for a chair. We'd sit there and study, and he had a wooden ruler and he'd hit you over the wrist if you didn't say a thing right! He taught us our Bar Mitzvah maftir.

RL: How many years did you go?

IG: I started cheder before I started grade school.

RL: Then you must have gone, what, seven years?

IG: About. I didn't start grade school until I was six and one half. This was probably at six years of age, when I started, until my Bar Mitzvah at thirteen.

RL: Every afternoon after school, for maybe two hours?

IG: An hour and half, two hours, I forget. I suppose it was shorter in the winter time when you couldn't go home in the dark.

RL: How did you feel about that? Or how do you feel about that in retrospect. You gave your children a Jewish education too, didn't you?

IG: First of all, for me, I don't care much about it. I'm a Jew at heart, but I don't need it. I support it, but if I never step in a synagogue, I won't care. I am not a shul-going guy any more. When I was a kid I had to go. My folks made us go, and I took to it. I learned it. I never resisted it. My kids, they were both Bar Mitzvah, and I think they have a little Jewishness in their heart. But my older boy, he goes for it more than Stanley. Stanley, of course, is busier and has more to do; he's a very, very busy man. But the older boy has time, so he goes to shul and he's a little more active in the shul. Stanley supports it. Stanley goes to the Temple now. They belong over there because his father-in-law does,

so they didn't even follow in my steps. I was more Conservative. But Arthur belongs to Beth El with us.

RL: Could you think back and talk about medicine? What's happened? As I said before, so many people used to die of things like pneumonia, and so on, that they don't any more...

IG: Well, we've seen a lot of progress in medicine. If I were a senior medical student and knew today what I knew when I was in the top of my class, when I finished, I couldn't even graduate! I'd be the biggest dummy in the medical school! There is an awful lot more to medicine today. There's a lot of progress in medicine just in this one generation, or two generations, if you will. When I was an intern, we had no penicillin. Penicillin was not known. Insulin was just coming in. We didn't have any sulfa. We didn't have our modes of diagnosis. Of course, sometimes I think it goes too far. Instead of using our heads, we are using a laboratory test to make our diagnosis for us. I mean, you don't look at the patient. This thing shows this... and that's it. But when I was an intern, if a person had pneumonia, lobar pneumonia, what did we do for them? In the wintertime, we had a porch on Station B on the second floor, above pediatrics, a cold porch. That was our theory, that they needed that cold air, and we'd wrap them up in blankets to keep them warm, but that's all we could do for them! We had no medication whatever for pneumonia. We used to call it a crisis... pneumonia would heal either by crisis or elysis. By crisis, I mean that on the seventh day of lobar pneumonia, all of a sudden the patient would go into a sweat and the temperature would drop down to normal, and they were over their pneumonia... if they were lucky! Most of them did; that's lobar pneumonia. But every once in a while they recover by elysis, where it was a long-drawn-out thing. They might have developed emphysema, which means a pus sac in the pleural cavity, where we used to have to do a rib section; you don't see that any more since penicillin, and you don't see lobar pneumonia any more. I'm sure the students today wouldn't know what diphtheria looks like, but I used to be able to smell a case of it! It had a smell that you could tell was diphtheria. You don't see that any more. They all get their shots, their immunizations. You don't see scarlet fever. You do see measles... but all the whooping cough, all those things, you don't see that today. Erysipelas, when does the doctor see a case of erysipelas.

RL: What's erysipelas?

IG: That's a skin disease. When I first came to General Hospital, my first assignment was Contagion. We had a Contagion hospital there... the building still stands, right in the same grounds... it was a separate little room... and we had 70 patients in there that I had to go visit twice a day. They had everything from diphtheria, measles, whooping cough, mumps, whatever... you name it... erysipelas. We used to consider that contagious. Erysipelas is a disease of the skin; you get a wound and you get a streptococcal infection of the skin. And meningitis... And laryngeal diphtheria. We used to have to innovate... if diphtheria got into the voice box, in the larynx, the membrane, they actually could choke

to death. We used to have to put in a tube so air could get down in the lungs. They don't see that today. The progress there has been terrific. For diabetes, the only thing we could do was by diet, and if they didn't stick to it... Today there is no excuse for anyone dying from diabetes if they take care of themselves. And surgery has progressed... anesthesia, and all those things, the progress has been terrific. My son's office last year did 300 colonectomies... colon surgery. When I went to school they didn't do a colonectomy. They didn't remove a whole colon. If there was a cancer or something, they would relieve the obstruction, do a colostomy. Today, Stanley just does the primary ostemosis, with a resection, on most of his cases.

RL: Why did he decide to go into medicine?

IG: Stanley would have done well in whatever he went into. I think he did it because his father was a doctor, but he picked it himself. I didn't care what he would do, because I knew he would do well. He was that type of kid. He just went in and he picked his own. I didn't encourage him. As a matter of fact, he changed his mind after he went into medicine. First he was going to take pediatrics, be a pediatrician... he loved kids... and then when he got into orthopedics, he was going to be an orthopedist... then he was going to be an anesthetist... and the only reason he became a rectal and colon man was because Bill Bernstein talked him into it.

RL: He's done well.

IG: So that's it. Is there anything else you want to know?

RL: Tell me a bit about Keneseth Israel.

IG: Keneseth Israel, that's the Orthodox shul. That was our shul. That's where I was Bar Mitzvahed in 1913. I think originally it was on Fourth Street and Sixth Avenue North. Then they moved up to Lyndale and Sixth. They built that building. And the Berman brothers, my uncles, were quite active there. They supported that quite a bit. Old Leventhal, he was the president. Leventhal had his store on Fifth Street and Sixth Avenue North.

RL: What kind of store?

IG: A general store. And Rabbi Silver was the rabbi there, a very well-respected man. All rabbis haven't been respected as much.

RL: There must have been a big fund drive to build the synagogue.

IG: They had a carnival. And raffles. It didn't take that much money in those days. If they made \$100 on something, they made a lot of money! But Berman Brothers, on the bima I

think they gave \$5,000, if I'm not mistaken, toward the new shul. My grandmother died in 1908, and they had a little metal memorial to my grandmother on the bima of the old Kenesseth Israel on Sixth and Lyncale. And then, of course, afterwards the Conservative movement came in, and most of the Kenesseth Israel people went to Beth El.

RL: Did your family switch over to Beth El?

IG: No. My mother was real Orthodox. She wouldn't even ride on the Sabbath. The only time I knew her to ride on the Sabbath was when she came over from the Old Country, and when we had a little sister that died of bacterial endocarditis in 1923, the year that I became a doctor. She was eleven years old then, when she was sick in the hospital and dying, and it was winter time and my mother took a streetcar to see her at the hospital. That's the only time she rode on the Sabbath.

RL: She kept a very kosher home?

IG: Oh, I'll never see it again. I don't think even Shepsel Roberts keeps as kosher, although he probably does. Incidentally, I taught Shepsel how to be a mohel.

RL: Oh, tell me about that.

IG: Any time he circumcised a Gentile that wanted to marry a Jew, he'd come down to my office, and we'd do it in my office. He had to do the little cutting, but I'd put novocain in. (Laughing) And I used to go with him when he first started. He's married to my cousin.

RL: How long did you do that before he struck out on his own?

IG: Oh, not too long. He started doing it right, right away. They didn't have much to do... One cut, and the rest of it was just the ceremonial part of it.

RL: Your mother was...

IG: Extremely Orthodox, and a grand old lady, she was. If it wasn't for her, I don't think I'd ever have gone to college. I finished high school at 16. I was interested in going on, because I was just a kid and didn't know what else to do, but if it was difficult, if I had to extend myself to do it, I would just as soon quit. Like today, the money it would have cost... Well, if it wasn't for her wanting us to go to school, I would have just quit. As a matter of fact, I wanted to quit school in my first year in high school. I never was very original in writing... I knew grammar, but anything original would never come out of this head, to write a theme or something like that. If I had to write a 100 word theme, I wouldn't know how to do it. I'd put in a lot of "ands" and "buts" and pronouns and stuff like that just to make the 100 words! No ideas came out of my head! (Laughing) All the

other courses came very easy... mathematics, languages, grammar, the sciences, and so on. But English... I never read a book. I couldn't read a book! If I had to make a book report, I'd read a synopsis some place, if I could find one.

RL: They wouldn't accept non-fiction? It had to be fiction?

IG: That's right. Sometimes I wonder how I ever got through school. My first year going from grade school to high school was quite a change, and I wanted to quit because I didn't like English.

RL: And what did your mother say about that?

IG: Well, what could I do? I was 12 years old! And my first year in college was my difficult year, too, although it was just the change that was difficult, and once I got into it, it was OK.

RL: And you lived at home all that time, until you got married?

IG: Yeah, sure. Except for that two months that I was in the Army. I'd never seen either ocean until I got in the Navy in '43.

RL: Where were you while you were in the service?

IG: In World War II I went to the East Coast... Williamsburg, Virginia, at CB camp, and I was there September to April... six, seven months. Then they attached me to a CB battalion. I went to Newport Beach(?) on the West Coast, and then we went to Pearl Harbor. From Pearl Harbor I went to Samarra in the Philippines. The war ended when I was there. Then I came back to the States and I was stationed at the Marine Corps base in San Diego. That was a good break, too, for me. When I was in medical school I took Medical ROTC. Why did I take it? I got a few dollars for it, that's the only reason! So anyway, on graduation, I got a commission in the Army, in the Reserve Medical Corps, a first lieutenancy in the army which was automatic, for five years. But we fought the war to the end all wars, so I never went to a training camp after that. I never did anything. And at the end of five years, if I wanted to renew my commission, or get a promotion, I would've had to go to camp. That would have been in 1928. Who ever thought we were going to fight another war? So I didn't renew it. I was trying to build up a practice, so the military ended, as far as I was concerned, until '43, which I told you about, when I enlisted in the Navy. And then when the war ended in '45, August 14th, I stayed on. I'd moved my family to the West Coast when I went overseas. I sold my home at 1209 Queen Avenue North... Blanche sold it while I was gone... and I moved the family out there for the time that I was overseas. They lived in Los Angeles.

RL: How did you happen to do that? Did you have family out there?

IG: No, but I went out that way, and it was a good chance... before that she'd never seen anything... an opportunity for the family to see some other part of the country. And if I was going out in the Pacific, I'd be closer to home. So I moved them out there. And then, when the war ended, they wanted to stay there. The kids loved it, and they wanted to stay. So what did I try to do? I decided I'd enlist in the Navy and go regular Navy. So I put in a request to enlist and I was just about to get in when one day in June, '46, when I was stationed at the Marine Corps base in San Diego, I went down to chow in the morning -- these are regular Marine Corps officers, colonels, I used to eat chow with them -- and three of those regular Marine Corps officers got notices from the commandant that as of January 1st they weren't going to be needed any more. They were kicked out, and they were good men. So I think to myself... I remembered World War I, where after the end of the war they junked the Navy, and I was already 46 years old then, and I said to myself, what am I getting into here? They want me today, but maybe a year or two years or three years from now, they'll tell me they don't need me any more. They'll junk the Navy again, and who is the first one that's going to be kicked out? Little Izzy Goldberg, who's old in rank and young in years of service. And being Jewish, I thought of that, too, because the Navy always had a reputation of being antisemitic. So I went right up to the commanding officer. and I said, "Skipper, I've changed my mind. I want out." I was entitled to be out before that, but I'd stayed on. So I got separated. They wanted to stay out there and I was thinking of starting practicing in California, but you had to take the State Board. I was going to go in with... he's dead now, but he was from St. Paul... Dr. Meyers... Ninety per cent of the service doctors were going to stay in California and were taking the Boards, and when I took it about 150 doctors took the Board and only seven passed! So I didn't get by the Boards, so what did I do? I came back to Minnesota.

RL: Were you involved in the planning for Mount Sinai Hospital?

IG: No, I wasn't involved. I was one of the doctors practicing there, but planning... Who were the planners?

RL: I didn't know. Who said we have to have a Jewish hospital?

IG: Well, I think it was the Jewish community, of course. It was because the Jewish doctors were having difficulties, and the powers-that-be here... Jay Phillips and the others... and of course the staff... Moses Barron, who was first president of the staff, he was active in it. And Max Seham was, to a degree... and the others... Gingold, I think, was a little bit active, but not too much... Reuben Berman...

RL: What about the idea of Jewish people not wanting to go to Jewish doctors.

IG: Jewish people not wanting to go to Jewish doctors? Oh, no, no. Well, of course, the Jewish people always wanted to go to the one with the reputation. Barron had a good

Jewish business. All the Jews went to Maxeiner for surgery... he had the reputation. They went to Adair for OB... and Simons, and Litzenberg, they were the doctors that supposedly had the reputation. Wilcott had some... but Wilcott wasn't Jewish. Malin didn't. But they went to the Jewish pediatricians. They went to Max Seham... Hy Lippman was in St. Paul... Steinberg in St. Paul...

RL: David Siperstein?

IG: David Siperstein in Minneapolis, sure. He had a lot of non-Jewish business, as a matter of fact.

RL: Then you were going to say that the non-Jews...

IG: Of course it's the same going into the hospital. I had one instance where I was in the office with Maxeiner, one noon, and the girls were out, I guess, and the phone rang. So I answered the phone. The party asked, "Is Dr. Maxeiner in?" I said, "No, he's not in. Is there any message?" "Well, maybe you can answer the question. Does Dr. Maxeiner deliver babies?" I said, "No, he doesn't." "Is there anybody in the office that does?" I said, "I do." "Do you take cases to St. Mary's Hospital?" I said, "Yes, I can deliver babies at St. Mary's. I have delivered babies at St. Mary's." "What is your name?" "Dr. Goldberg." "Bang!" went the receiver! It worked both ways.... that doesn't mean it was a general thing... but today it's different. Matter of fact in the old days, the Mayo Clinic wouldn't accept a Jewish resident. I remember... You know the Feinmans... related to the Shapiros... Max Shapiro's cousin... He was a resident down there in X-ray. This was long before your day. They used to have a store on Bryant and Sixth Avenue North, a general store, and the oldest sister was married to an engineer... Horwitz... he was up in Duluth, the City Planner...

[End of interview]