

Mr. Brewer
1/18/16

Samuel (S): I've done about sixty oral histories at this point of Americans who lived in Cuba and none of them have been from Preston so this is a very exciting experience for me. But what I'm going to do with this, with your permission, is I'm going to take the transcript of this and I'm going to donate it to the University of North Carolina archive so that future historians who might be interested in some aspect of this that I haven't covered in my work will have access to it. Then I'll provide a copy of it to you guys as well. Does that work for you?

Mr. Brewer (B): Sure does.

S: So can I look at... this is Preston? La Avenida?

B: Well... your pronunciation is a little off. See this was the American section of the residential area. This was the Cuban section. You go down further and there was a black section.

S: So this is the railroad tracks or no?

B: Not anymore.

S: Oh. Right.

B: They would bring cane cars in and stack them up here.

S: And now when you say black are you talking Haitians...

B: Jamaicans, Haitians. See, I was so young when I got there, I was only 18 months old. So is my memory very sharp? I'm not so sure.

S: Everything you've said so far is what I've heard.

B: But anyway, I had always understood Cuba was made up of 1/3 whites, a lot of Spaniards came over from Spain and they're just as white as you and I are, and a little bit of the natives of Cuba who were there, the Caribe or however you pronounce that, before the Spaniards got them all sick and they died. Then the Haitians. But during my tenure there the head honcho, whether it be Batista or Machado or whoever, said no more Haitians, we want the job for Cubans. So they couldn't come over anymore. And most of the people that worked for United Fruit Company here were slightly darker skin than I have, they weren't white, they weren't black. You know, I'll show you. This was a book put together by United Fruit in 1944.

S: Wow. I've never seen this.

B: Well you wouldn't. I'd be surprised. This is the United Fruit Company Preston Division. This was Wurster. He lived in Boston. That was the United Fruit Company

Headquarters. This was Skyler whom my father detested. He was in charge of both Banes and Preston but he didn't like to boondock so he lived in Havana. This was the hierarchy of Preston in 1944. That was my father.

S: And what was your father's name?

B: D. Russell Brewer.

S: D. Russell Brewer. And your mother's name, just for the record?

B: Ruth Elizabeth Brewer. And this was J.B. Trindler and he was the manager all the years I was there.

S: Is Smith there? Russell Smith? Is he in this photo?

B: Right there.

S: Wow. Okay.

B: But this was the first guy. And this is H.R. Smith and he lived across the street from, where I'll show you, from us. Tasson ran the grocery store, supplies and stuff. P. Bowlen was into manufacturing. Sevinaut was an engineer and he later committed suicide. Dr. Otis helped with my father when he was so sick. Burgess was in charge of the railroad and he was... can't think of his name...

S: So this was '44?

B: Yeah this was '44. Charles Davison was in charge of all the agricultural and best I can remember the United Fruit had around 300,000 acres. A lot.

S: Wow. Yeah. So they just gave these out to employees? These books, or...

B: My dad had it so I had it. This is you're out in the bay and you're looking back at the mill. And this is where, see this fence going down? We lived right around the corner. I'll show you more. The school where I went was right up here.

S: The Lee school.

B: Well it was the Preston School.

S: The Preston School.

B: She and my father didn't get along to well. And I had two older brothers so when I got there to school she didn't like me. Now a lot of this is industrial so we can go quick through it.

S: This is incredible. I've never seen anything like this. I mean, this is a real piece of history that you have here and it's in such great condition also.

B: Well it had been re-put together. And this is the mill engineering personnel and you can see they're 99 percent Cuban. He was American and he was American but all the rest were natives.

S: And what were their names?

B: Right here. He was not the boss man. Herbert Smith was the boss man. James Reid was the...

S: So would they have lived on the Avenue as well? These two Americans?

B: Yes they did.

S: Would the Cubans?

B: They would've been on the other side. You know, the liberal progressives if they listened to me on this they would say, "You were just very exclusive." No. And this was the mill but they took care of cars. There were mechanics there. Lot of palm trees. And this was Engine 11, which was a very short switching engine that would come down to where you saw where the tracks used to be, get two or three cars like this, bring it up to the mill and back again. Now do you see these guys with rods? I thought when I retired and moved to Pawleys Island I was 65, I thought I'd get myself a small chainsaw and put it on the end of a pole and I could cut branches. I could hardly lift that up.

S: So that's what they're doing here?

B: Yes except these things are 50 feet long and a big metal hook.

S: So describe, I'm sorry, so this is in the mill?

B: In the mill.

S: So they're taking sugarcane.

B: They've taken the cars and now they've tipped the cars so the doors, they get these hooks and they pull the loops off and then they make sure the cane gets out of the car and goes on the conveyor.

S: So they're taking the railroad car, they're opening it, and ushering the cane into a conveyor.

B: Would you like to take this book?

S: I mean, this book is incredible. I don't want to steal this from you. This seems like a family heirloom.

B: As long as I get it back.

S: Maybe when I'm back in North Carolina. Cause right now I'm leaving, as I told you, to go to Chile in a week. I would love to look at this at some point.

B: Well one of the guys who pulled those things out came to work for us as we'd call him a yard boy. He wasn't a boy. He had a waist like this and shoulders like this and arms like you wouldn't believe.

S: So these people who worked in the mill, they were all Cuban?

B: Mostly all. Yeah.

S: So not the Haitians, not the black Cuban, or the Jamaicans?

B: Well the only exception, and you won't see any of that in here, is United Fruit contracted with a Cuban, a Chinaman who lived in Cuba to bring workers from China. And they did in fact bring workers from China. They housed them up behind the mill and they worked for three months a year in the mill doing exactly what I can't tell you.

S: Just during the harvest?

B: Well they had nothing to do with the harvest. They stayed right there in the mill. And they lived back there and it was so funny as a kid to go back there. They'd be sitting there playing checkers or something. Most of them didn't have half their teeth and couldn't speak a word of English. So they were talking Chinese and Spanish.

S: Wow. They did speak Spanish though?

B: Oh yeah. And the nine months that they did not work in the mill they were on their own. So they would fish. And they would take a rowboat and row out eight miles, way out to the mouth of the bay, and fish. And what they were fishing for was red snapper mostly cause we could go out and fish for snapper and catch 30-40-50-80 in one day, one morning. And Espeleta, I'll show you his picture in a minute, was my dad's secretary. And dad and he got together and dad helped him build a boat on the agreement that Espeleta would take us fishing. So we went fishing and Espeleta could communicate with these Chinese and we'd get out there and he had me up on the front of the boat, told me when to drop the anchor, only 30-40 feet of water. And when he'd line up this sugar mill stack with that mountain peak and one over here he'd say drop it. And if it didn't hold he'd back up and it would dig in. It had to be in the right spot. And then you'd catch the fish. And when the wind did not pick up, which was rare, he would pull all these guys back home. It would be five or six rowboats behind us and we'd be doing four knots.

S: Cause you had a motorboat and they didn't.

B: Yeah. So whatever Espeleta wanted, he got. And if we weren't catching any fish, you know, he'd go over and talk to them. You could see him and pretty soon we were

over catching fish. If we left and had bait, he'd drive us around and give the bait to them. Or if we really had a huge day, he'd be giving them fish.

S: Oh wow. I'm just... I forgot to turn my phone off. Just so that doesn't interrupt us.

B: Here's the sugar going up to the grinding mill.

S: So did you go in here as a kid or no?

B: Oh sure. Not very often. I got this far going through it again yesterday. A lot of big machinery. Fulton Iron was making a lot of money off of United Fruit Company. See and here's the raw squeezed cane and you'll see.

S: So they were trying to liquefy it there?

B: Fulton Mills, Fulton Iron Works, then they would distill it like it was whiskey I guess. I think they kind of overdid it on the technical stuff. This is the ones running the mill and you can see from here, this is Bartell, Bolen, Hurst and see I didn't know this guy. But these three lived on our street and he lived nearby, Antille, and this was his brother, Jimmy Antille.

S: So the Antilles did not live on the Avenue?

B: No.

S: Why not?

B: They both worked the mill. They were up closer to the mill. They were from Louisiana and they had grown up around sugarcane.

S: Got it. Was there a class thing in terms of who lived on the Avenue and who didn't?

B: Sort of.

S: Now the Cubans who were in the management positions, how did they get those management positions?

B: Just by appointment.

S: Okay. Did they speak English?

B: Oh yeah.

S: Had they been educated in the United States sometimes?

B: No. See that's why I never learned to speak really fluent Spanish. If my father had been the accountant in Banes, I would've spoken much better Spanish because the residential district was right in the town of Banes. The town of Preston was an artificial town built by the United Fruit Company. Banes was there for years.

S: Sure. Did you have free access to all the different parts of the town? I mean, there was no trouble with you going to the Cuban area or the Jamaican...

B: Oh no. No.

S: Was that true vice versa? Did they ever come to the Avenue or no?

B: Yeah. But the Avenue was no animals or vehicles allowed. It was a wide footpath. Once in awhile somebody didn't know it and was there but they didn't get thrown in jail or anything.

S: Was there was a local police force?

B: Well, here's another thing that people don't know about Cuba. Cuba has no state police.

S: Right. The rural guards right?

B: That's right. And that was the army and United Fruit was required to build a barracks and a place for them to live in a different part of town. But they were there. So that's how dictators keep control. You know you pull a little string in Havana and boom. Whereas if our president wants to do something in Missouri, he doesn't go through the army, he doesn't go through the state police, he has to go through the governor. It doesn't happen that way down there. Never did. This is just a lot of machinery.

S: What year were you born if you don't mind me asking?

B: In '29.

S: '29. So you were down there in '33? You were little though. When the revolution, the first revolution happened?

B: Yeah. '34. They would bag the sugar and much to the surprise of some people, those were 150 pound bags and those guys were picking it up like it's nothing and they would put it on flat cars and take it down to the pier, which I'll show you is gone, cut them loose and dump them into the hold of the ship like it was wheat. And when they got to the Revere Sugar Refinery in Boston, they pulled it out with a vacuum.

S: So this is the Great White Fleet? The famous...

B: No. This is just two sugar boats.

S: Okay. But it was connected to United Fruit?

B: Oh yeah they owned them. And I've seen a picture and I can't probably put my finger on it, when they came into Boston Harbor, the locals referred to them as "the submarines." You could go out where the sugar was on the hold and go out to the

edge of the ship and you're that far from the water and you went out on the Atlantic. I rode one one time from Preston to Boston.

S: How long did that take?

B: About a week. But the banana boats we'd go to Havana to pick up and they were two and a half days. They were pretty quick. And there were only five or six and the minute World War II broke out they were confiscated because they were the only refrigerated freighters around.

S: Were they confiscated by the Cuban government or the U.S. government?

B: U.S. Now this is the pulp of the sugarcane after all the juice is squeezed out. It's called bagasse and they burned it for fuel. And if the wind blew wrong and one little particle would get on a white shirt, you're done. You couldn't get it off. You couldn't even blow it off. And see they'd put the bags on the flatcars.

S: So is this how you had electricity? Was this the source of your electricity or no?

B: Yeah. See you can see here the turbine.

S: So when the mill wasn't operational, when the harvest wasn't in season...

B: They still ran them. It was pretty self-sufficient. It had, I think, 400 miles of railroad tracks. Two hospitals, one in Preston with five physicians.

S: Led by Dr. Ortiz?

B: Yeah. But originally with Dr. De La Guardia but he left and went back to Panama. But I'll show you their pictures. They'll come up.

S: De La Guardia was Hispanic or he was...

B: He was Hispanic. This was the laboratory where they tested stuff. During WWII the shipping was limited because PT boats would come into Preston Pier to get water because they could trust the water. And we got to talk to a lot of those guys and they would come in and get black strap molasses. Have you ever heard of black strap molasses? Well you take sugar and it's like gasoline, the most refined item is jet fuel and then you go down the scale. Well here you would take sugar, then you would go to molasses, then what's left in the dregs is called black strap molasses and it was almost black. And they would put that in a tank on land and ships would come in and take it to Russia during the war because they used it to make gunpowder. And do you know those ships that came in had one small anti-aircraft gun on the back and a 50-caliber machinegun, and they traveled alone in the Atlantic?

S: Across the Atlantic.

B: Well from Cuba up around England and on to Murmansk.

S: These are PT boats?

B: No. These are small tankers and those were during what the Germans called “the happy days” of U-boats. Took a lot of guts. Anyway, they would stack all this sugar up and put corrugated siding and roofing just to store it. But that was only done during the war. Now this was the guy that was the engineer and he’s the one that committed suicide. Never married. Long after I’d gone.

S: What was his name again?

B: Sevenacht. Now this was the American side and what they did, I left to go to school in ‘42 and came back after nine months and was surprised. The road used to be up here by the houses so then they decided everyone would need a victory garden so they dropped it down. Our house was way up here. This was the pier that the big ships came in. This was the more local pier for the people. This was the sugar that was covered up.

S: Is your house in this photo or no?

B: It is but you can’t see it. I’ll show you. I’ll be more precise. Our house was that one right there.

S: Got it. So what is considered the Avenue?

B: The Avenue is what’s in front of it.

S: So the swimming pool is there?

B: Yeah.

S: So the swimming pool is still there.

B: Yeah it is.

S: And there was a golf course as well right?

B: Yeah but it was a mile or two over. It is now gone. When I get on Google I can look around and one thing that is just as spiffy as when we were there is the baseball field.

S: I’m sure.

B: And back in the ‘40s that baseball field didn’t have just bleachers. It had a roof. Baseball was big time.

S: Who played baseball?

B: Central Preston. That was the team.

S: And who would you play against?

B: Well we never did much of that but they'd play against any other town. And every kid in Cuba played baseball. In the United States it is football, basketball and baseball. Down there it is baseball, baseball, baseball.

S: I'm quite aware of that dynamic. Yeah. Wow.

B: This was the traffic center for the railroad. This is the side of town where what I would call the middle class Cubans would live, the clerks and the whatever.

S: So is that Dr. Ortiz also or is he living on the Avenue?

B: No. I don't know where he lived. Probably out by the hospital. There were a few houses out there. And this is on top of the mill and you're looking the same place. This is the bay. I always was told it was a 100 square mile bay and United Fruit came in and it was so shallow that they built the town out and you'll see that it looks like that. To get to deeper water. And it was eight miles from here to the opening, to the Atlantic and eight miles going this way. And for some reason we never went that way. I asked Espeleta, "Why do we always fish over here?" and he said, "There are no fish over there." I never thought to say, "Why aren't there any fish over there?"

S: So Espeleta spoke English as well?

B: Extremely well. That's why he was my dad's... my dad was in the tropics 36 years and he didn't know how to say one time, "I've got it." We were getting off a train and we'd forgotten something and were hurrying to look for it and he comes out the door and says, "Yo got em." And we never let him forget that. But this is just the construction department and you might say building what? 400 miles of railroad tracks, bridges and all that stuff. And you'll see, three Cubans, one American.

S: Yeah and he got something from the ash on his shirt. No I'm kidding.

B: And this is a little bit down the scale of homes.

S: So these are Cuban homes?

B: Yes.

S: So this is the middle class Cuban area that you were talking about? So this is middle management sort of?

B: Yes. Well a step down from middle management. But you'll see they were all brick, they've got a tile floor, bathroom, inside plumbing. This is the Avenue. Now you're looking... you're at the end of the Avenue and you're looking down toward the bay. The school was down there, our house was down here.

S: So the swimming pool is here. Got it.

B: I am backwards. You're looking towards the swimming pool. This is what I thought I was looking at. This is Tassens house and this is just a driveway that stops there.

S: Who took these photos?

B: I don't know. I left home and went to school.

S: And where were you at school?

B: Military school in Virginia. Augusta Military Academy. This is... the Americans were living up here and these were duplexes. Big duplexes. And this was the baseball field that I used to think was huge. Not really. This is personnel.

S: And it's all Cuban names.

B: Well except the Bilbee. Never knew what his... that's him there. He was not Cuban. But this guy Urbino, funny guy. And this guy Banrell worked at the pier with the port captain and that's kind of a joke, but anyway, could he ever play golf.

S: So the Cubans would play golf as well?

B: Oh yeah. But not many. This was the accounting department again and here is Espeleta. Enrique Espeleta. Suarez, he could play golf. Big guy like me but boy, he could play. Shelby King was my dad's assistant. Juan Dominguez, he could sit down and play the piano all night, never look at a note.

S: Wow. So where would somebody like Espeleta learn English? Do you know?

B: No. But he's as good as I am. This was my dad's office building and the main entrance was right there and his office was right there. I got to talking about this and my barber got fascinated. That's why these notes are on here. This is, again lower class, but laborers place. But again, inside plumbing...

S: These are Cubans though?

B: Yeah. Oh yeah.

S: Did you ever go out into the cane fields or no?

B: Well occasionally. If you took a ride from Preston to Banes, which we did on occasion...

S: On the train?

B: I'll give you a funny one. My mother was a bug on teeth thank heavens and whenever we went to Boston which was always in September we got to go to the dentist. But in case anything happened in Cuba, she knew about a dentist in Banes whose name was Dominguez Poopoo. I can remember he took out both of my upper wisdom teeth and I went out and played golf after that. But we'd ride this modified vehicle that they had to carry passengers who go on the rails. And the steering wheel was the brake. But it took awhile to go all the way around the bay. This was the Pan American Club where the upper crust attended.

S: What would they do there?

B: Oh there would be parties. There were pool tables, a ping pong table, a lounge.

S: Did you go there after school ever?

B: No but we'd go over there in the evening and there was a bar and I'd joke about this. How old did you have to be to have a drink? Tall enough to put 15 cents on the bar and you got a drink.

S: And this was mostly Americans?

B: Yeah. What went on up here I haven't a clue. Never went up there.

S: Really? Do you have ideas or no?

B: No. Never curious. But this is what this looked like inside. You have comfortable chairs, gaming tables, ping pong table over there, pool table was right here.

S: Now did you have to be a member of the club? So what kept Cubans from going there?

B: They didn't want to. That's all. The greens fee on the golf course was zip. Caddy was 9 holes, 20 cents, 18 holes, 40 cents.

S: Who would caddy for you?

B: I don't know where they got the kids. I picked the game up, my parents can't remember what age. I say 6 or 7 and I was pretty wild. Then I went to military school at 12 and I had to go out for a sport. I'd never had a baseball in my hand, or a football or a basketball. So it ended up, the a... Jim and my Spanish teacher who was American said, "You don't want to do that. I'm the fencing coach. I'll teach you how to fence." So I took up fencing. Not agile enough for a foil or sabre. I ended up an epee but that built up my arms, my shoulders and my legs and when I go back to Cuba, I can hit the ball miles. And the caddies would fight over who took my bag. They hated carrying for women who would hit it from 30 feet. This was the closest thing to a hotel that they had.

S: Okay. What was it called?

B: Employees Residential Club. Free accommodations provided in modern building having tile first floor, polished hardwood floors bedrooms and suites. Say a traveling auditor came to town, that is where they'd stay unless he was a friend of one of the people who lived there. I never ate a meal there. This was a club for all the Cubans. Not too far away and the bay was right here and they had a swimming pool too.

S: And so this would've been the middle class Cubans you were talking about?

B: Yeah. That's the building again. You can see the bay right there.

S: How many people lived in Preston?

B: You know I've often wondered. Probably 3-4,000. Something like that.

S: How many Americans were there?

B: Down to 20 when we left. When mother and dad arrived there were 200.

S: Wow.

B: But Cuba didn't want foreigners and you had to play politics, probably a little bribery to get someone in to head up this department or head up that department. And they had no problem promoting qualified Cubans. No problem. This is the swimming pool where I learned to swim. And well, here's Preston's baseball team, which I never went to see.

S: Its integrated. That's very interesting.

B: Oh yeah. Cuba is always integrated.

S: But this isn't... would the composition of the middle class community be as diverse as this baseball team or no?

B: Whoever could play. So that's why you'll see Cubans coming into America to play baseball, some look like this, some look like that, and some are really black like that. That was never a problem. This is the Catholic Church and of all the Americans in Preston, the only one who went to church as a Catholic was my mother and us. That's where we went.

S: So who would go with you?

B: My mother.

S: Who else would be in the church though?

B: Cubans. And the only other church was a black church, protestant. This was the local school, not the one I attended. And you see if I'd had to go there I would've learned a lot of Spanish. Same thing. On running down names, J.E. Burgess lived right next store and he had three boys, Billy, Donald and Dickey. Well Dickey and I were the closest of age. We spent a lot of time playing, you know, cowboys and indians, you name it. I tried to find him on the Internet and got nowhere. And what bugged me was I had his full name. Richard Lee Burgess. Now where did he live? I don't know. Where did they come from? Missouri. So I of course started there. Never got anywhere. But you'll see again...

S: Was he the oldest?

B: No he was in the middle.

S: So there was a younger brother as well?

B: Yeah.

S: Did you look for the younger brother?

B: No. See I didn't know this guy. But Burgess is white and this guy is white and all the rest are Cubans. Here it is. 12 locomotives and 683 cars for handling sugarcane and so forth. Now you're up on the mill and you're looking out, which is where the cane cars would come in and this is the middle section of town and the bay again. And there are the locomotives. So you had the personnel in there taking care of them. And this was kind of like a machine shop you'll see in a minute.

S: So like a mechanics shop?

B: Oh yeah. And they serviced cars. My dad had a car. Only three executives had a car. My dad had one. They'd come down every Monday to pick it up, check it over, fill it with gas and bring it back. His cost?

S: Wow. So everything was provided and he had a salary too?

B: Oh yeah. And this is out on the farmland. Cane cars and so forth. And this is to keep cattle from crossing.

S: Got it. Have you read the book *Telex in Cuba*? Do you know that book? By Rachel Kushner.

B: Yes. Yeah I can't find it. I have it.

S: I've read it. But you've read it though?

B: Yeah. I told you I'd read a book that was written by somebody but they had two-story houses. But we didn't have any two-story houses. Not when I was there and they kept saying just outside of town were the cane fields. When you got outside of town, you went around a bend and up there was a dairy and you went maybe 20-30 miles before you saw any cane fields. So whoever wrote that story romanced it to their liking. And you can see they did some construction.

S: Wow. So that's railroad tracks?

B: Yeah railroad. The road when you got outside of Preston was dirt all the way around to Banes. And one time on the way home somewhere, my dad is driving and we got stuck in the mud. His speaking of Spanish was nil but he managed to go find a farmer and get him to bring his oxen down and pull us out. Now here is Dr. Otiz, Dr. Navarro, I forget that... but they had five doctors and he was... five or six doctors in Preston alone.

S: And they were all Cuban?

B: Yeah. Except De La Guardia but he's gone here. He was Panamanian. That's where I had my tonsils taken out.

S: Now did everybody have access to the hospital as well? So the Cubans had access and you guys had access?

B: You know the liberal press decides to say the mean old nasty American companies? The poorest guy could come down the hill sick and they would take care of him. Charged him nothing.

S: And that's cane workers as well?

B: Anybody. And you'll see a room here shortly. This looked like a wonderful entrance. We never used it. This was a ward. This was a private room. And your air conditioning was a fan. This was an operating room. By today's standards very barebones. Laboratory. They had an adapted railroad car that was an ambulance. This was the groceries and so forth. This was Tassen. He was the head. Armstrong was his assistant. All the rest are Cuban. This was the maid's commissary we called it. Soft goods, hardware down at the end. And what's neat about this, if the weather was not too swift, it had a cover and on top of that instead of being cement it was concrete. And if you had skates it was like skating on ice. So we'd hustle over there. And that's what the inside of the store looked like.

S: Was this the only real store in town?

B: Yeah. Except there were some places a little further away that you could buy a little something but this was the main one and they kept the prices fair. And of course in those days the bottle of the best rum was a dollar.

S: It's still pretty cheap in Cuba.

B: \$12 a case.

S: And you would drink Cuban rum?

B: Oh sure.

S: Was there a lot of drinking?

B: No, not really.

S: The Rachel Kushner book makes it seem...

B: There was not. This is... and they had a bakery and they made a cracker called galletas. Loved them particularly when they put sesame seeds in them.

S: And the bakery was all run by Cubans?

B: Yeah. But my dad couldn't stand the bread so our cook, Stella, she made bread. Boy could she make bread.

S: Now was your cook Cuban or Jamaican?

B: She was Jamaican.

S: Did you have other people who lived or worked in the house?

B: Yeah. Her daughter and Gonzalez was the guy who pulled the thing and a laundress. Mom didn't have to do too much. But I'll give her credit, 36 years in the tropics and when dad retired and we moved to Atlanta, she didn't have any of that help. Never said a word about it. Never complained. This was Captain... and his name was Ralph and he lived next door and had one daughter named Betty and she went to University of Havana and ended up marrying a Cuban aviator who finally...

S: So this was an American?

B: No he was Norwegian.

S: Wow. So his daughter would go to the University of Havana.

B: It's the only college in Cuba.

S: Got it.

B: And it was left of Berkeley. She married this guy who was in the Cuban air force and he finally... and she got out. Went over to Miami.

S: Now any of the Americans, did their kids go to the University of Havana or no?

B: Not to my knowledge. And of course that was 500 miles away.

S: Yeah. That was a different world.

B: And compared to 500 miles here today, that was further.

S: Sure. And you went to Havana a few times no?

B: Only passing through. We'd take the train, we'd take the private railroad car out to a railroad town, junction in a town called Herrera, ride that to a town called Alto Cedro which is tall cedar. And then the daily train that went from Santiago to Havana would come by and we'd get on that and go to Havana.

S: Wow. How long did that take?

B: 24 hours. But when they weren't still they were doing 100-120 km. They moved. And do you think they cut the grass by the tracks? God knows how many dogs, pigs and kids they killed. But this is the agricultural department. These guys both all worked out and lived out in the boondocks. And here they're cutting cane and people didn't realize how tall cane got.

S: Did you ever cut cane?

B: No. But we'd go over to the cane cars that were parked and we learned which fincas produced good cane to taste and we'd take cane out of there and just take it

and chew on it. But didn't take long to learn which were the good ones. And my first memory was loading up this kind of thing pulled with oxen. And my brother road... whatever. He used the word oxen and the teacher wrote him down, said they were bulls. No. They're oxen.

S: Now where did these guys live?

B: I'm going to show you. They had barracks for them.

S: Was it them and their families or was it mostly single men.

B: Single men. See this is what it looked like when they were pulling them. Then they'd take them over to a hoist over here and that would lift it up and put it in...

S: In the train car?

B: Yes. And then just as I was at this point, they came along with a tractor and they could pull one, two, three, four, five, six, seven of them.

S: Wow.

B: See now they're taking it out of this and putting it in the cane car.

S: So your going to Augusta Military Academy, this must've been a mind-blowing experience for you in comparison to this world you grew up in.

B: Well yeah. It was different.

S: Did you visit the states at all when you were growing up?

B: Once a year in September.

S: To Boston?

B: Mother and dad were from Boston. Dad had bought a farm in Whitman Massachusetts for his parents. We'd spend most of the time there and my mother's sister lived in Melrose so we'd spend some time there. And then he finished school up in northern Vermont so he had a lot of friends, Carpenter family that we'd go up and visit. Only five miles from Canada. Boy I'm telling you even in September and August, when the sun went down I froze to death. I'd come out of Cuba.

S: Especially Oriente, the hottest province.

B: And here is just laborers' residences.

S: So how many people would live in a barracks like that?

B: That's not a barracks. That's a house. Just a family. Now what's coming up next, native shack.

S: Bohios.

B: No this is what they lived in. They provided it for themselves. But I'm telling you it's got a better roof than what's on this house. Now the floor is dirt, the bugs are there.

S: Is there water there? No electricity?

B: There ought to be a well around. But Batista did one thing. He put a lot of schools out in the middle of nowhere and had a wind generator on top that provided light. And this was when they started straightening up and building newer ones they did them like this.

S: You know where Batista is from right? Banes.

B: Banes. This was before they upgraded them. Pretty rural. And we had our own dairy.

S: Wow. So who ran the dairy?

B: Somebody. I don't know. But it was done.

S: So did you have fresh milk?

B: Oh yeah. Every day.

S: What was in here?

B: Silage probably for the cattle. They'd make bricks. Everybody makes bricks. Cinderblocks. We're done.

S: Wow. That was a history right there. I've never seen anything like this. I've been looking at Preston stuff for a while now and that was a real treat. Thank you for that. What is this book?

B: Well that's mostly the other part of United Fruit.

S: So in Guatemala?

B: Yeah. Central America. Who is this? Could be me. My mother and dad.

S: So this is early '30s?

B: Oh I don't know. See now here are people. I don't know who they are.

S: Oh they're adorable. You okay?

B: Yeah I dropped something.

S: I got it. I see it. Did your parents live a long time afterwards too?

B: Yeah they both were 97 when they died.

S: Wow. You've got good genes.

B: This is him when he was older and he discovered a baseball cap before Trump. I don't know why these don't have a date on them.

S: '49.

B: This is my mom.

S: So this is the last year when he left? '49?

B: No.

S: Is that October 27th? Is that what it says?

B: Yeah. October 27th.

S: That's the day my dad was born.

B: Really? He left... I was home for Christmas. I left to come back to military school in January. Couldn't tell you the date. Fifth or third or something. And then he retired in August of '50 at age 56 but there were some politics being played and he got tired of it.

S: What does that mean?

B: Well, the guy that he had to report to in Boston as his boss didn't like him and that didn't matter as long as that guy's boss was around because C.B. Taylor and my dad were close. But when C.B. Taylor retired, they started to turn the screws on my father. So when I was finished with college he said, enough. I was the youngest of three. Here's my mom at the Episcopal Church home in Louisville.

S: Is that by St Paul's?

B: In Louisville?

S: Yeah. Or do you not know?

B: It's on Lindon Lane and...

S: There was just a Methodist in Cuba who was connected with... or Episcopalian actually. I'm not sure.

B: I'm just looking for Cuban pictures and I'm not getting any here.

S: No worries. I've seen this book. Actually I interviewed Elizabeth Newhouse. She lived in Cuba as well, the woman who wrote the essays for this book.

B: There you can see when I didn't swallow the watermelon seed.

S: So this is you at graduation or maybe even earlier?

B: Maybe earlier. I can't see my sleeves. I can't see what rank I've got. This is my dad with his two brothers.

S: Did they come and visit you ever?

B: No but he got them jobs at United Fruit and they booted it. Damn near got him fired.

S: Were there distinguished guests that would come and visit Preston ever?

B: No place to stay. No restaurants. People said, "Did you eat a lot of Cuban food?" No. I ate what Stella cooked. This is the church again in Preston. This was up near the golf course.

S: The Catholic Church?

B: Yeah. This is up by the golf course. This is the same one. This is Pearl, Stella's daughter standing by the side of our house. See all that Bougainvillea?

S: Do you know what happened to her or no?

B: No. Well yes I do. She left Cuba and ended up in New York and became deaf and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company treated her wonderfully. Gave her a full time job. And this is Stella, her mother, on the back step of our house.

S: So she helped raise you in some ways, Stella?

B: Oh yes. She's my second mother. And see I was the third and the last one at home. And we had a kitchen table as big as this and my mother would get so mad with me. I'd get on one side and she on the other and Stella would come out and save my butt more often than not. This was up on the golf course in Preston. Can't tell much here but that's the backyard in Preston with the dog we had.

S: Would your brothers come back to visit as well?

B: I'm sorry?

S: Your brothers came back to visit as well? During the summers?

B: Well my older brother went into the service in '41 so I never saw him again until '46 when the war was over. But when the war was over he came down and spent the summer and we did nothing but play golf. 36 holes a day.

S: How many holes were on the course? It was an 18 hole?

B: No, nine. That's my grandmother, my dad's father.

S: So did your grandmother live with you in Preston as well?

B: No.

S: On the farm.

B: On the farm. This is aboard ship at some point. Traveling to New York and back.

S: That's your father?

B: Yes.

S: Did you have a dog when you were in Preston?

B: Yes. Named Jip.

S: What type of dog was it?

B: Mongrel. I thought she was just fine. I don't know who that is. That's my mother. I'm trying to not bore you with things that are not Cuba. You know we took a roots trip back when I had hair and no weight.

S: Where was this?

B: That would've been probably Atlanta.

S: So did you ever go to Havana between '49 and '60 or '59?

B: No.

S: You never went back to Cuba?

B: No.

S: And you haven't been back since?

B: You know, from what I've seen on Google maps I wouldn't want to go back. They've let it rot. And our house, I don't remember because I had no responsibility but any time a board rotted out or I guess termites got it, you'd just call the carpenters shop and they'd come and fix it. If we punched out a window screen, they came and fixed it. And I don't remember the house ever being painted but it was always painted. And maybe those last eight years when I was away, all that kind of stuff was done when I was away. Like when they changed the road in the back of the house and put the Victory Gardens? I wasn't there when they did that.

S: Did you follow events going on in Cuba in the 1950s?

B: A little bit. But you weren't told much. See first of all you were told that Castro was a good guy. And I knew from the beginning that he was a communist.

S: Well going back earlier, so the coup of '52 when Batista came back into power, do you remember that at all or not really?

B: Well see to me what I remember is Batista being in power all the time.

S: Yeah that makes sense.

B: And he was behind the scenes a couple of times when somebody else was president but he was still in power. But I describe dictators as they can be benevolent, vicious, totally self-serving which is what gets most of them, but Batista as far as I could tell was a benevolent. Now maybe the United Fruit Company had dealings with Batista and they said now here's what we want, you do this and we'll leave you alone. We were just not bothered.

S: Did you feel a part of the Cuban landscape at all or did you feel kind of in your own community separated from it?

B: Separated because you see on that whole acreage, 300,000 acres, there was water and electricity. You get off the property and there was no water and no electricity. And living on the property... I have a hard time with my daughter. She's been there for two weeks in Cuba. Took a trip from Havana down to Holguin. Coming home, I'm picking her up at the airport Friday. But what she's seen is nothing like what I lived in and it's hard to explain it to her.

S: Is she going to go to Preston?

B: They won't let her. And she's been told not to do that because it's trashed. It's gone. The house that we had and maybe... I've had a picture but I can't find it. It had screens $\frac{3}{4}$ and they were double screen large. But they started slightly higher than that. They started about here. All screen. Now you know they haven't replaced a screen in 70 years. They haven't replaced a board that the termites got. Because if you went under our house in Preston, what did you find? Dirt. And what was holding the house up was columns about this high, about two feet square that the house was built on top of. Were there termite inspections? Hell no.

S: When you were there, did you ever travel to Santiago or other places in Cuba?

B: I went to Santiago once. I was a kid and I broke my glasses right... and there was no place in Preston or Banes. So my mother and I went down to Santiago to a store and I got new glasses.

S: How do you get to Santiago from Preston?

B: Back out to Herrera, Alto Cedro, catch the train down to Santiago.

S: And how long does that take?

B: Oh that would take probably half a day but it's mostly connections and you've got to get there to get here and you catch the train and when the train decides to leave and all that stuff. But the track from Santiago to Havana was two lane and they had layovers here and layovers there and everyday one went east and one went west and that's how you traveled in Cuba. I'll be interested to find out from my daughter if they've changed the central highway. See the central highway in Cuba, it was a two lane road built during the Depression by Roosevelt to give them some work down

there and give some of our people some work. But did they mow the edges? Hell no they didn't mow the edges.

S: I was there. It's two lanes most of the way. Yeah. There are moments when its not but outside of Havana it's a little thicker. Who did you play with?

B: Dickey Burgess.

S: And that was it.

B: Pretty much because Betty Barth lived next door. Trindlers had no kids there. H.R. Smith had no kids. The single guys who aren't married. The next house is King and Shelby King had a son, Shelby or Junior. And then next was Hurst and his daughter was real small. And Tassen had no kids. So next door was the Burgesses where Dickey Burgess lived and then Bowlen and I can't remember this. I look back in my memory and why can't I remember? When I was first in Preston, a guy by the name of Reginald Crenshaw lived in that house that I'm thinking about but he got tuberculosis and had to leave. And that's when R.N. Smith got promoted. I don't think I was in town when J.B. Trindler retired because I have no recollection of R.N. Smith living in the Trindler house, which was very nice. So I don't remember that. Blank. Anyway, Betsy Jean who was a couple of years older than I left when her dad did. Then the next house for a while was occupied by a guy named Dooley and he had three daughters. And he didn't stay very long. Then somebody else lived in there, didn't have any kids. And one of the Antilles had a daughter, Lucy. She was in the same class that I was so I saw some of her. But we lived here, where am I? Yeah we lived here and Lucy lived back over here.

S: Got it. Which would've still been in the American area?

B: Oh yeah. You had to go 50 miles to not be in the American area.

S: Got it. Were there intercultural marriages? I mean did any Americans marry Cubans or no?

B: Well I heard that Lucy... No he was an American. There was a young guy working and I don't remember for who, named Nelson Craig and she got together with him somehow and we stopped and saw him in Murphysboro and I often thought how in the hell is Lucy going to get out of Preston? Because that Antille family didn't have any money. They weren't going to send her away to school. I mean she was stuck. But she met and Nelson is a nice enough guy and he did some government contracting. This was back in 1954. I never had any other contact with her.

S: So what did Lucy's family do?

B: He was the Antille who worked behind in the mill.

S: Okay so that would've been a different class in some ways. Got it. But they would've been invited to the social club and things like that or no? The Pan American Club?

B: They never did go. See this gives you a better picture than I was able to get. This was our house and you can see some roof damage. And this was Burgess, this was Bowlen, this is R.N. Smith.

S: That's Russell Smith?

B: Yeah. But he might have moved up over here when he became manager. This house, what did I say? Is gone. And this house is gone. And I suspect termites ate them up and they fell down. And if you wanted to go to the grocery store, you walked down around here and went this way and you went across the tracks here.

S: So the grocery store was on the Cuban side?

B: Yeah.

S: Would Cubans ever be on the Avenue other than if they were working there?

B: Or going to visit somebody.

S: So were there friendships between Cubans and Americans?

B: Yeah but you didn't see much of it.

S: Got it.

B: Or at least I didn't. I was just a kid.

S: Did you ever play golf with Cubans?

B: With Cubans? No. Just caddies who were the ones who taught me to play golf.

S: Got it. And they were young folks mostly?

B: Yeah mostly young.

S: What is this book here?

B: That's my dad's scrapbook. That goes through a lot.

S: Do you mind going through it with me?

B: I can't answer a whole lot of questions.

S: You've already given me so much more than I ever thought I would know. Are you doing okay? We've done about an hour.

B: I'm fine. This is Bart's house. He was the captain. This was our house. This was Burgess and this was Bowlen, this was King, and no house here and this is H.R. Smith and this was Trinden. You can have this.

S: Thank you so much. Wow.

B: But I got that right off of Google Maps and you can still go in there and say Preston and they'll try to get you to go to Camaguey but... Castro decided that no more Preston. Had to be Camaguey.

S: What was Banes like in comparison?

B: Well Banes was a Cuban town to which the Americans attached themselves and built some houses on.

S: So did you know any of the Americans there?

B: Oh yeah. One of them worked for my dad and we'd go over there, like I said, to the dentist. And we'd play golf over there. They had a different kind of golf course.

S: Was theirs 9 holes or 18?

B: 9.

S: Did you ever go to Guaro?

B: Oh yeah. That's where my mother and R.N. Smith's... I think her name was Mildred. They were quite friendly and we'd go to Guaro and they had two boys who were younger than me and in my mind were spoiled and a pain in the butt but they had a very big house and it sat up. You could drive cars underneath it and it was probably two stories. Had a big yard.

S: So were there ever get togethers between those three towns of the Americans?

B: Well the Banes golf team would play the Preston team and I guess some adults they had some gatherings but not the kids.

S: Did Banes have a school or would they go to the school in Guaro?

B: No not Guaro. See Guaro was in the Preston division. Banes... I don't have a map to show you.

S: Did you guys used to get the Uni Fruit Co Magazine?

B: I don't think so. We got the *Havana Post*. One day late. But it was English.

S: Yeah. I've read through them a lot.

B: And my dad subscribed to the Sunday edition of the *New York Herald Tribune*. He'd get that a week late. The other thing that amazed me, in the house that we lived in here, there were 12-foot ceilings. No ceiling fans. Not one.

S: How did you cool yourself?

B: Well my recollection is number one I weight 170 pounds, not 250 and that's a big difference in warm weather, and the trade winds would pick up every morning around 8 o'clock, 9 o'clock and blow gently over the bay over the east. So they'd

come over the bay eight miles over the water over town and go another eight miles the other way. And that seemed to happen every day. Now you realize that the last eight years for me, from '42 to '50, I was not there from September to June. So I forget all about that weather but my best recollection is I didn't have a jacket. It didn't get cold. But it did get rainy around January and somewhere in there.

S: Could you describe your house to me?

B: The house itself? Shoot I could draw you a map. It was probably 70 feet square, large, but it had just two bedrooms, a living room, a dining room.

S: So you shared a room with your brothers?

B: No. The porches were at least this wide, that's from here to here.

S: And did they go all the way around?

B: All the way around three. The kitchen was different. So we slept out on the porch.

S: Did you have a room in the porch or was it kind of...

B: No just an area where the bed was. But you see I don't remember, and this sounds strange, my older brother Russ for some reason mother and dad didn't like the schools and Stella Lee the teacher. So they sent him back to Jamaica to go to elementary school. See we were all born in Jamaica. Dad lived over in Jamaica for nine years.

S: Working for United Fruit?

B: Yeah. They liked dad. Keep in mind, in 1931, dad was 36 years old. He'd spent a year in New Jersey and then the previous nine years he was in Jamaica. And where they lived in Jamaica was Kingston and they lived in a section called Halfway Tree. It was funny, just recently I met a lady whose parents live in Halfway Tree. She's Jamaican, works for the bank here. So their house was just out, not in a compound. Whereas here everybody worked for United Fruit. And something else I haven't told you, all the houses here are painted yellow. No variety. Yellow. And people will say, "Well isn't that strange?" And I'll say no that's where I grew up. That's just the way it was. I didn't think about it. And the only thing that wasn't yellow was the commissary and dad's office building and that was concrete. Now I've lost my train of thought.

S: What did you... I mean cause it's a small town but its not a small town because its in a larger community, I mean did you think of yourself as part of that larger community at all? What did you think of the Cubans who were there or was that not really on your mind?

B: Well it wasn't on my mind. They left me alone, I left them alone and I had a few run ins. Interestingly enough, the guy who I said was a good piano player who

worked for my dad, he had son named Humberto. We didn't get along at all. We got into it. And fortunately I came out on top.

S: Over what? What would arguments be?

B: Well you know if you made any comment about Cuba in the negative, they get upset. Really. And see my dad was a Roosevelt-hater. So if they said something ugly about Roosevelt I'd say, "You're right." And they'd look at me. But I think... I don't think it got down to that level at that point. But overall, I think one of the problems with United States American relationships in the Caribbean was inflamed by Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy.

S: In what way?

B: Well you give people money and you give them money and you give them money, pretty soon they've given you their dignity. And if you ever don't give them the money, you son of a bitch why didn't you give me the money I was supposed to get. And they looked at the United States as big, fat, wealthy Americans. And occasionally when I was riding on one of the trains, it's warm and I've got the windows up and my arm out the window and kids would look at me with freckles and say, "Americano give me some money." And they'd pester you. And I'd finally tell them to get lost in Spanish and they'd look at me funny and leave. But there was always some envy I think.

S: So when the revolution happened and the anti-American rhetoric started becoming much more popular...

B: What's fascinating is Enrique Espeleta, dad's secretary who worked for him the entire time we were there, took his money out of the United Fruit Company pension plan, which was not much. My dad after a career retired on \$400 a month, it wasn't much. But he took the money and put it in the Cuban National Plan put out by Castro. He lost it all, ended up leaving and going to Miami. So he got snookered. And you see, I can see a certain amount of resentment. I live over here but all the money and privilege is over here and I can't get that. But that was never done, you know, I can't think of a more benevolent company than the United Fruit. And when you see those pictures you see how few Americans were in the pictures. They're all Cubans. And you see I've always felt that if I were going to invest in a country like Cuba, I would want partners that are Cuban so they can share our good fortune together and protect me from being thrown out as a foreigner. I'll admit that.

S: Did you ever feel, I know you and Humberto but otherwise, did you ever feel any sense that anti-Americanism existed in Cuba?

B: No but it was always there and I always... jealous. That's all. We had it, you didn't, they didn't like that. And I was honest enough even then that if it were the other way around I wouldn't like it either.

S: Got it. Show me this book. Is that cool?

B: I heard my dad talk about Taylor Railroad Company for years. I thought he was saying T-a-y-l-o-r but it was a subsidiary of United Fruit and it was in Guatemala so he had that kind of stuff. Now this is Preston. See I recognize people. Debilby, my dad, don't know, don't know, Skyler, don't know, must be Mrs. Urbina, Trindler, Burnhurst, Tassen and... this is some social function. And here's my dad's department again. Same one that you saw that's in the... And here that's Dickey Burgess and that's me on the right.

S: Oh man. That's quite a swimsuit you've got going on. Sorry this is your father right here?

B: Yes.

S: And that's your mother?

B: No.

S: Who is that?

B: I don't know. I really don't know who that is. I'm guessing... see that's Skyler and that's her, I think that's Mrs. Urbina that goes with him but I don't see some of these others wives and I wasn't familiar with them. And you look at the surroundings of this and I can't pick out where it was. I think that's the harbor of Havana.

S: Yeah it is. So your father would've taken this photo or no?

B: Well once a year we'd go in and out of there. But apparently to get a job with United Fruit he had to be bonded and that's my dad when he was a young man with hair.

S: Wow. What year would've this been? Teens, twenties?

B: Oh twenties I guess. I don't think there is much in here. He had superb handwriting.

S: Proms, parties, etc.

B: Well why there are a lot of blank pages I don't know.

S: This is 1911. Oh my gosh. What year was your father born?

B: He was born in 1895.

S: So this would've been his high school right? Have you looked through this?

B: Not recently. There's not much in there.

S: A poem. Should we read your father's poem? Wait. Carol Crampton. Do you know that name or no?

B: No.

S: Wow. This is fun. Now you talked a little bit about the nature of the company and certainly it provided a ton of work for people in eastern Cuba. Did they feel like... like who built the school? Was that Batista or was that the company or...

B: The school I attended, the company built it.

S: The school the Cubans attended?

B: I would bet United Fruit built all the buildings because they required, as I told you, barracks for the army and they all look alike. I really don't know for certain but I think they did build it all.

S: Its interesting... cause I'm mostly focused on the '40s and '50s I'm looking at this one school that United Fruit funded for the Methodist Church where it was an agricultural school in Playa Manteca.

B: Playa Manteca. Oh yeah. That was close by. See I would tell you that Playa Manteca... if this is Preston here, Playa Manteca was probably over here somewhere and what that means is lard beach.

S: Right. And so I found that interesting and that was Russell Smith who kind of pushed that and who seemed like a pretty decent man. Were there other ways in which the United Fruit Company felt an obligation or some sort of duty to improve the lives of their workers?

B: Just they upgraded the quality of their barracks constantly. You know, they provided medical care.

S: And electricity and stuff, was that free for the workers?

B: I believe it was. And I'll tell you one thing that's interesting. My dad retired and then ended up in Atlanta and then when he lost his sight because of a bad glaucoma operation and he fell down between the bed and the wall in an apartment they were living in with my mother. Couldn't get out. So we finally persuaded them that they needed to move to Louisville to a retirement home. How I got them to do that I'll never let you know. And my mother had a car. I got her to let me sell it. She fought that a little bit. I said, "Mom, where would you go? Do you know where you're going in Louisville?" No. And I said, "You don't need a car. If you need to go to the doctor's, Barbara will take you." I was in life insurance sales, ran my own time, I could take any time I wanted. And boy I'm losing my train of thought.

S: We were talking about United Fruit Company and what it offered some of the workers and that's how we got on to this story.

B: But they... oh yeah. I remember what I was going to tell you. One day I sat down with my dad and now he's 86-87. My age. I said, "Dad what was your salary in Cuba?" And he said, "\$13,000." That's the highest he ever got. I said, "Okay. If they had moved you to Boston, Melrose or someplace and you worked in the home office there, what would they have to pay you for the equivalent?" Didn't take him long to

say, "\$39,000." And because in Preston where we lived, no rent, no electric bill, no home repairs, no medical payments, and in his case no gasoline even. I bet you we didn't buy much gas. And no taxes. And Americans who lived abroad all the time he did paid zero U.S. income tax.

S: Did he have to pay Cuban taxes or no?

B: If they were, they were nothing. And the tragedy was that he never qualified for social security except by accident because when he moved to Atlanta at '56 he couldn't drive a nail straight much less anything else so he had to have something to do. So he went to work for Atlanta Oak Flooring Company and it worked out wonderfully because a guy by the name of English Clark owned that company and he hired dad to find someone to run the accounting department. So he said to my dad this is a two-year job. You do that and then your job is finished. So dad did that and went in and said, "I think the time has come." And Mr. Clark looked at him and said, "You're now my last executive vice president. You're staying." And he became kind of a consultant. He stayed there 10-11 years and qualified for social security.

S: Wow. What year did he pass away?

B: My older brother died... no dad died September 27th 1992. Russ died November 1st, '92. Mother died January '93. And my other brother had died in 1970 at the age of 42. Turned out he had a congenital heart defect. He didn't know it. Nobody knew it. But Betsy the daughter that you talked to said, "Daddy how does it feel to be the last one?" I said, "Betsy I'm the youngest. I'm supposed to be the last one."

S: It's a long time to be without that generation. Yeah. Absolutely.

B: But you see I never lived at home. Our kids never lived at home. I never lived in the same town as any of my relatives until I moved here two years ago.

S: Does your family live around here?

B: Betsy does. And that's why we came here. This facility, Summit Hills, is an assisted community to the Lakes of Litchfield in Pawley's Island. So I could've moved to that and been... we have a friend whose floor plan is exactly this. So we went over and measured all kinds of stuff to see how things would fit but we wanted to be near family. Now we get the bonus that my grandson Rob is married and has a grandchild that lives here. So we've got a great-grandchild. So this is all new for us. And see growing up in Cuba, when I left home, I'm gone. So I then took a job in Atlanta because my mother and dad were there and that was a dead-end job so I moved to Louisville and then stayed there 45 years.

Mrs. Brewer: Are you guys thirsty?

S: I think I'm good. I think we're almost done. This has been so helpful.

Mrs. Brewer: Are you sure?

S: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I have to head back to Chapel Hill at some point. I can't thank you enough for this. This has been a real honor for me. Can I get your email address?

B: Brewer407@gmail.com.

S: Alright. So, as I said, I'm going to Chile for six months...