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**INFORMANT: MANUEL BARROS, SR.  
CONDUCTED BY: BARBARA FERTIG  
DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 1987**

**B = BARROS  
F = FERTIG**

**LFP BF-A002**

F: I'm interviewing, okay, Manuel Barros, Sr.

B: Senior, yes. (F: mm-hm)

F: Who was born (B: in Lowell) in Lowell. And your parents were born where?

B: Madeira Islands. That's fr-- (F: mm-hm) associated with Portugal, you know. (F: mm-hm)

F: And they came here when? Do you--did they tell you about--

B: Well, I'm seventy-four. Ah, they must have come about six years before that. (F: mm-hm) Yeah. Maybe more or less because she, she just died maybe three, four years ago and nin-- she was (F: really!) ninety-six years old.

F: She lived a long time.

B: Yeah. Nin-Ninety-six. (F: uh-huh) She died, [clears throat] she wanted all her children around her and, and she got her wish. We had, we had three boys, three girls. One, one of my brothers died with a heart attack. We still got three girls living and two boys. Me and my brother, (F: mm-hm) Joe, which is a very active bowler in Lowell. One of the best in Lowell. (F: uh-huh) He just turned sixty.

F: Your brothers and sisters all still live in this area?

B: Yes. They still--they, one lives in Pelham, but two live here in Lowell. On Hanks

Street. (F: mm-hm)

F: Tell me, did your parents migra--come directly from the Madeira Islands to Lowell?

B: Yes. No-oh--they came from the Madeira Islands. They went to Brazil first, (F: oh!) and then from Brazil they came to Lowell. (F: mm-hm)

F: And did they come to Lowell to work in the mills? Did they do that?

B: Uh, [clears throat] my father worked in the mills (F: mm-hm) and uh my mother run a boarding house. She had, one time she had twenty-eight boarders in her house. And she was very-- it was like ah if you had a sister and her brother was coming to Lowell, she would say "Go to Mrs. Barros' house." She would not allow drinking, she would not allow woman in-- the minute she found any of that stuff they-- (F: they went out) [both talking at once] she threw them out. They went out. (F: mm-hm) She had, threw a very, very respectable, ah, boarding home. They used to call them [Portuguese word], houses, [same Portuguese word] You know that's uh when ah--like these people work in the Appleton Mills in Massachusetts; Boott Mills and all that. They would live in her house. (F: uh-huh) And they would do [clears throat] their own cooking, and ah some she would cook. You know they pay more, you know. (F: uh-huh)

F: So, um, did, did you eat with some of the boarders then? When [both talking at once]

B: Well, then [clears throat], then as we--she had six children, you know (F: uh-huh). Um, as, uh, sh-she got more children, she, she just, I think she stayed with just two cousins. She just let them, you know. As they, as they went back to the old country, or the--some went to California something like that, they, ah, she just didn't replace them, you know. (F: I see) She moved into a smaller home, you know. (F: uh-huh) She stayed just with two, ah, two cousins, you know. That's--then when they went, went to the old country she never got anymore. (F: mm-hm)

F: Growing up in your house, did you speak Portuguese?

B: My mother always made us speak Portuguese. She didn't care if we spoke English outside, in the house she wanted us to speak Portuguese, and she didn't--she knew very, very, very little English, you know, and uh, my father died when I was, ah, I was going to be--see he died in March and in June I was going to be sixteen, you know. (F: uh-huh) So that's quite a few years ago, and uh, and we stayed with my mother, and then my mother got city, city aid, you know. We were just-- [clears throat] I used to work in the bakery when I was eleven, twelve years old, you know, delivering bread house to house. We used to deliver bread before going to school. [clears throat] Excuse me. And we used to deliver bread after school. We used to deliver twice in the same house. And, uh, we used to go basket, you know.

F: Uh-huh. And whose bakery was this?

B: This, at this time it was my father's. My father had a bakery, you know. (F: uh-huh) He had a bakery, partnership with somebody. He had the, and, ah, it was, ah, [clears throat] called

Moonlight Baking Company and sometimes they used to call it Moonshine Bakery you know, [interviewer laughs] they used to make a thing. And then when he, ah, he--the mills all started, Appleton Mill and Hamilton Mills and all that started to show we got the Depression there like you know, he had to close his bakery. He had emerged with another bakery which was on the corner here. It was, they used to call it Central Bakery, you know. And then later, years after Central Bakery emerged with this one here now used to be Lusitania Bakery and I, when I, [clears throat] when I bought it I changed it to Barros Pastry Shop, which I originally opened on Gorham Street where Santoro's is, you know, on Gorham--

F: pizza and sub shop?

B: Yeah. And I used--I had a little shop there and that's where I opened. I think that was about thirty-five years ago, you know. I'm not sure on the dates, you know.

F: Uh-huh. What was the neighborhood like in those days? Was it all Portuguese?

B: Around here it used to be all, all Portuguese. The minute you opened your, your shop it, you know, they'd come in. You had to work all night, you know, to make bread and doughnuts and so on so forth. Well, at that time they didn't have uh doughnuts. When I opened up I was more of an Americanized baker and I added cakes, birthday cakes, wedding cakes, and I added that to, with the help of my wife, you know. (F: mm-hm, mm-hm) And uh, we, we started, we turned the bakery in--like an American bakery like, you know, with, still with the Portuguese bread. We had the Portuguese bread, sweet bread, Portuguese sweet bread. And then we had the wedding cakes which sometimes I used to have twelve, fifteen wedding cakes every weekend, you know. (F: yeah, right) Every week. (F: mm-hm) But we use to sell them like fifteen, twenty, twenty-five dollars. You didn't get noth--much money for that. Because you used to work for three, three dollars, twelve dollars a week, you know. (F: mm-hm) So money wasn't that uh--there was no money, you know. (F: yeah) So--

F: And um, were most of the people who lived in the neighborhood then and who were Portuguese, Portuguese speaking?

B: Oh yes. Most of--they used to be, uh, well I, when I bought the former Lusitania Bakery, uh, it used to be all along Central street up until uh, what did they used to call it, it used to be Katy Street, North Street, Katy Street, Ames Street, Mill Street, Rogers Street, Abbott Street, uh Cedar Street, Floyd--up to far as that it used to be all Portuguese people on both sides. They used to be sometimes mixed. And then coming down Central Street it would be Charles Street, Tyler Street--they would be Portuguese on both sides. (F: mm-hm) You know, all the way, that would be Charles Street over here, there would be Portuguese on, until they broke it down to make Zayre's and all that. And then over here on, going the other, opposite Charles, Charles Street going, going to uh, Gorham Street they used to be Chapel Street, and then there'd be Gorham Street, Summer Street, be all Portuguese on both sides. Like I said there'd be some English and some French but they would be ninety, ninety-five percent all Portuguese and it'd be all uh, five percent of different uh-- (F: mm-hm) and this would be an area [clears throat] oh--going all the way up to Gorham Street, then there'd be Madison Street there'd be, they broken them down to make highways, you know the connector. (F: yeah, yeah) See they broken, there would be all,

all Portuguese people. I remember that because I used to deliver bread with a basket before I went to school and then when I became of age, uh, I started to drive and I used to deliver--well even th--even before driving, with a horse and team. I still got a little tail end of the horse and team, you know. We used to go and we used to go on the outside of the, the City Hall in Lowell that would be all houses from the mill workers, you know. They still got some there on the other side. But going, they used to be Moody Street. Moody Street. There'd be Tilden Street, there'd be--I kind of forgot the names of the streets. They'd be all these houses where the people lived. The mill made those houses (F: uh-huh) so they could live-- [both talking at once]

F: Were they still owned by the mills in those days?

B: Yes, they were still mill, yeah. (F: mm-hm) And uh, we used to deliver in what, it would be nothing to go on a Saturday afternoon with a wagon full--it was a wagon bought from Unida Biscuit Company, you know. And my father bought that, had a lot of pride in it. Nice yellow car--uh, nice yellow wagon with a horse, and uh we used to bring over seven hundred loaves of bread there, just in that area. (F: o-oh) In that area. All the way from Worden Street, Kilton Street. Oh, I can't think of all the names. All the way down up as far as uh, Textile Street or Textile--you know, something like that, up around, just a little bit before Textile School, you know. (F: mm-hm) And you go in that area. On one side it would be all Portuguese, and one side it would be French, you know, (F: uh-huh) the French people, (F: uh-huh) you know. And uh, they, it would be nothing because there were a lot of boarding houses. You would bring twenty, thirty breads into a, into a house. (F: uh-huh) You had a big, big basket you know. (F: uh-huh) And you would bring twenty, thirty breads into the, into the, into (F: uh-huh) the house. I remember that as if that was today.

F: And that would, it would be the, the loaves like French bread or wheat bread?

B: Yeah. Well in them days they used to make more of the round bread. The round Portuguese bread they used to call it, the round Portuguese bread, you know. (F: uh-huh) And uh, there would, people would bring, people would get a, uh--then we started to make the long loaves, then the long loaves they used to cut that in three, in three things and put--some of them used bring grapes, put grapes, bananas inside and they eat the br--eat the grapes inside the banana. And then when they hit the Depression people didn't have much money. They used to buy bread and they, they used to put molasses on the bread, sugar on the bread. They even went as far as putting compound uh, short--uh compound lard. In them days they used to call it compound lard. It was a refined uh, lard, not the pure lard, you know. It would be the--they refined it. Almost like make--like they make Crisco today, (F: uh-huh, uh-huh) you know. They would refine the lard, you know. (F: mm-hm) And the lard would be, that was before Crisco and all them (F: yeah) probably come out on the market, see. I remember that because I used to, you know and our bread had a lot of holes in it, you know, that's, and the people would say I like that bread because where there's no holes you can't put butter, you know. (F: yeah, yeah) They didn't have no money. They didn't have no money. (F: uh-huh) We had people that, that we used to mark in the books, you know. Like my father died, he had books that people owed him three, four hundred dollars in bread. And when the Depression came that they really just, there was nothing they--he didn't have no more--he didn't, he lost all that money. My father died, people owed him money. The ones that owed him money, they didn't pay. The ones he owed

(F: yeah) money they came, they came (F: yeah, yeah sure) and find--that's, (F: yeah, uh-huh) that's the way life is, you know. (F: mm-hm)

F: Uhm, back when you were young must have been when a lot of the fruit trees and grapes arbors were planted around here?

B: Well, all along these, the fruit trees people would have a lot of grape vines, you know, in their yards, you know. (F: uh-huh) And people would plant, plant a lot, you know, they would plant a lot. Which they are now doing. These people, the new generation, that came from all the old countries now, in their back yards there--they have grapevines, they have everything. (F: mm-hm) But [clears throat] they would uh, they would have pears and things like that. Even when I lived years ago I bought a house on back Central Street here with my father-in-law and uh, we had a great, great pear tree; big pears like that (F: wow) they used to, we used to make jams and things like that, you know. (F: mm-hm) We had all the--my mother-in-law and my wife they would all get together and they would make the jams and things like that. People, people really did have a lot of, lot of fruit trees in them days, you know what I mean? (F: uh-huh) Because uh, there was no television. People would like to amuse themselves with something so they, they all had a garden you know. (F: uh-huh)

F: Can you tell me, uhm, your son said he saw just a glimpse as a child of things like Christmas customs. Can you tell me about Christmas when you were young?

B: Well, everybody, everybody would have a Christmas thing, And everybody you used to go, we used to go house to house and sing. (F: mm-hm) We would have a group, you know, and some would play a violin and guitar, and we'd all, we'd all sing, you know. And uh, I knew a few they used to sing [sings in Portuguese] You know, like uh, the owner of the house will you please open the door because we want to give you our Christmas thing. And we would all go in the house. They would open the door and they'd have something, something there to give you, you know, to give you something. And a lot of people used to make uh, a manger. (F: a manger, yeah) You should see the mangers that they used to make. They used to make a manger that would take that whole room there like that, you know. I said, ten by twelve or by fifteen and they'd make the whole They'd make uh things making people making moonshine with the real stills. And all that. All, all the things. (F: uh-huh) They would uh--

F: People in the family would make the figures?

B: They'd all make the, the figures, they'd make everything. They'd, and they'd hang uh, fruits and oranges and things like that and then they'd make uh wheat. They'd put wheat in little uh, little jars, you know. Little, little--

F: O-oh. Would they sprout it?

B: And they would sprout. (F: ahh) My wife, my wife still does that.

F: She still does that?

B: Yeah, she still does that.

F: She still makes a manger?

B: Uh, she still makes a little manger. But I mean she, she took up ceramics and she made the whole thing. Now she's had that about eighteen years and she still, she puts it all up, you know.

F: Is she going to put it up this Christmas?

B: She's going to put it up this Christmas.

F: Would it be possible for me to come and photograph it?

B: Sure, sure, sure. I mean it's not a, a big thing, (F: yeah) but it's what she made, you know. She usually makes it all uh, she's got all, all the things, and she's got, she winds it and it plays uh, (F: uh-huh) "Silent Night" I think. I think it plays "Silent Night."

F: A music box?

B: A music box, (F: yeah) but it uh--she made it and she's got the angels, she's got the--everything--the little, the little uh-- And her father went to the old country and he brought little Jesus but, he's, he's a big statue, you know. They, they, they said "Gee, what did you, what did you buy one so big like that?" But, the man is passed away and they always kept it for, (F: right) she always kept it for a, for a thing of uh-- (F: sure) Re--it reminds her of her father, it reminds her of her father and what her father used to do, you know. But uh, every place would have--not every place, but almost every house would have a manger. (F: mm-hm) Almost. They, that, this is going like uh, my mother and if, see? That's my generation, my grandfather didn't come, it was my mother that came from the old country, you know. (F: mm-hm, mm-hm) From the Madeira Islands. And they used to, they all, it was a different uh, like they used to be a Portuguese band hall, it's still a Portuguese band hall, but more of a club now. We used to have uh, uh, dances, the old folks dancing, you know. (F: uh-huh) And they'd play the guitars and they'd, and it, it's almost like these dances that they call out, um, (F: square dancing) square dancing. Almost a square dancing. They say [speaks in Portuguese] It means one pair in the front, one pair in the back, and, you know, and you didn't say, "I danced", you know. Different, different--I, I kind of recall that because I was, I was young (F: uh-huh) and I was kind of courting my wife, you know, and my wife used to go to those places like that. There would be another girl I was kind of sweet on. She, you know, we used to, you know, dance. That's, that was our uh, hangout like, you know. (F: mm-hm) And we looked forward to, for them to, they used to call it [speaks Portuguese] you know. And they used to call it like a Portuguese um, ball (F: ball, mm-hm) Portuguese uh-- (F: mm-hm)

F: Is uhm--I come from a town where we have a substantial Portuguese population in Connecticut, too. We have some, they used to have something called a [speaks Portuguese word] Does that--

B: [speaks Portuguese word, correcting interviewer]

F: Yeah, [repeats word Mr. Barros has just spoken]

B: [speaks word again] That is a, a [sighs] Uh, that's like a, a, like a dance. We used to, we used to do that, see? And the Portu--see some different islands call uh, one way and some people call ano-ano- another, see. (F: yeah) They used to call [speaks Portuguese words], you know and they call, and like when we come, where my folks come from, the Madeira Islands, they call it [speaks Portuguese words] And even my son was in it. Uh, they used to dance, you know. (F: mm-hm) Partners, you know. The fellow that used to uh, the fellow that used to uh, direct that. He's a, he was a veteran. He's in the Veteran's Hospital. Charlie [Borges], you know. And he used to, he was very good in that. And he used to make them, make uh, [speaks Portuguese word] They used to call it [speaks Portuguese word] And it, it was very pretty. People used to go. I even, we were, used to go and travel as far as uh, Taunton, New Bedford and all that with, with the whole, with the [speaks Portugues word] We used to go--

F: You had costumes?

B: Yeah, we had costumes, yeah. Costumes. (F: uh-huh) And of course we had [speaks Portuguese word], you know. (F: ah-hah) M-A--on the

F: On the hat.

B: On the hat, (F: uh-huh) you know.

F: You are a musician, too, right?

B: Well, I was--I played a bass fiddle but uh--

F: Weren't you in a band?

B: Yeah, I was in a band. And uh--but being a baker, you get up early in the morning. A lot of times I used to come--finishing the music you know. And I just changed my clothes and come to work, see? And it was--kind of thing and and my wife she wasn't the type that wanted to stay home, you know. She wanted a life, you know. She didn't want uh a man that worked all day and played at night you know. (F: mm-hm) What kind of life, [doorbell rings] kind of life she, she had. Ah, I have to open-- (F: yuh, okay) I have to open-- (F: yuh) [interviewer shuts tape off]

F: Okay, I'm sorry. We missed a little bit. That's all right, go ahead. "The people use to like me."

B: The people used to like me. They--there was a musician which was really a musician. He used to pl--he used to teach music, (F: mm-hm) used to teach music. And he went on a vacation and I took his place. (F: uh-huh) And when I, [chuckles] when I ah [pause: 5 secs.] when I wasn't there the guy came, come back from his vacation. Came with the band to play the band. The guy come up to him, he says "Where's Shorty?" (F: hm) He says--"He, he's not our regular man. This is our regular man. He took his place because he was on ah, ah vacation. So he, this

is the man." "Oh," he says, "I don't want you. You get Shorty back. [interviewer laughs] Not this guy." He says "This guy just stands there." He says "Yeah, but he's a music teacher." "I don't care if he's the President of the United States. He can play the bass fiddle, you know." Boom, boom. Me, I was just a faker, what they call a faker. (F: uh-huh) But I used to fool a lot of people. I used to try to sing and (F: uh-huh) everything like that. And the, the guy didn't uh, the guy didn't uh--uuh so I had to up my, my--I had a chance to sign up with a man to play on a six month cruise on a boat. I came home and told my wife. (F: ho-ho) And my wife says "Out!" [interviewer laughs] You see. And I had a, a chance to play one time they had a--there was--there used to be a, a--in town, an all girl band. But the bass fiddle used to stay out a lot or something like that. And one time I was a place there and they came in and made a show. And they asked me to play with them, you know. (F: mm-hm) And it happened I had a white suit and they had all white. (F: uh-huh) They wanted to sign me up to play, [both chuckle] play with them. That went over like a-- [both laugh] you know when I told my wife that see. But that's getting out of your subject from Lowell. I don't know if [mumbles]

F: Well, when did you, tell me when did you move to the suburbs? When did you sell the house here in the back central [unclear]

B: Well--Sue, about eighteen years ago, huh? Sold the house, huh? (Sue: The house up here?) Yeah. No, when we moved to, to the-- (Sue: When you moved to Tewksbury?) Yeah. (Sue: Yeah. Because we've lived here for thirteen--I'd say closer to twenty, Dad.) Close to twenty, yeah. (F: hm-mm) Close to twenty years. We didn't sell it. We just kept it. We just bought a house in ah--in Tewksbury at that time.

F: Your, your son said that that most of the Portuguese he knew as a child had moved out of town. Is that--

B: Well-- [interviewer says something unclear] They, yeah--they-- they's a lot of them went to California. Oh, a lot of them.

F: Well, when did that happen?

B: This is--happens--not--oh geez--I was on--I was already--even before, [says hello to someone coming in] even before I bought this baker shop. They--I was on Gorham Street. They were moving to go and join the tuna boats (F: oh) in they ah--fishing, you know. There's a lot of them that went. They went out there. (F: yeah) A lot of them.

F: There was a lot more opportunity there?

B: Yeah. Well, the mills were closing. The, the you know different, see? (F: uh-huh) And there was no--there was more opportunities. People, people only getting like fifteen, twenty, thirty dollars a week. And, and out there they were getting more. (F: uh-huh) Like we had a friend, not a--he was from the family on, on--my father-in-law's cousin. They were making--in the Lowell silk mill they were making fifteen, twenty dollars a week. He went out to New Jersey and as a weaver he was already making--this is going way back--making fifty dollars a week. He told, he called, he called or he wrote to a lot of people here and saying that--how much money he



was making. "Look you guys are not making." They didn't believe it. They thought he was lying. That he was making fifty or sixty dollars a week, (F: mm-hm, mm-hm) you know. Out there in, in New Jersey. Ah, Clifton, New Jersey. He was uh--and he bought a piece of land out there as big as North Common. For five thousand dollars. They, they still didn't believe it, (F: uh-huh) you know. They you know people were afraid to make moves. (F: uh-huh) They're not like today. People'll say "Oh, it's better in California?" Z-zoomp, they go to California. (F: yeah) But in them days those people came from those islands. They traveled some--like my mother-in-law took I don't know how many mon-month or two to get over here from--She had a lot of storms and everything like that. To come from Port--Madeira Islands, to come to Boston--Boston, New York, I forget where--and she was afraid to travel again, back. They were afraid to make those moves, you know. (F: mm-hm) Because they were--took so long. (F: mm-hm, mm-hm) I still re-re--I delivered bread to a lot of these old, old people that came fr--not old people--my age now, I'm seventy-four now. They would be that age then, a (F: yeah) little younger, see. And I used to deliver bread and a lot of those people would talk to me you know. And they, oh they'd say "Oh, I knew your cousin in Portugal or in Madeira, (F: mm-hm, mm-hm) you know or something like that and we would talk. (F: ah-huh) I recall a lot of, a lot of nice people, you know. And I, ah also recall even ah this Brazilian, Brazilian. He was a--I forget what he was--a mason or something like that and uh he was a good, good worker; a very, very religious man. And he, he was, he says "I'm fortunate to make--come to America and make good money. And he--at the collection in the box he was the only one who would put a dollar, or five or-- All the others would put pennies and things (F: mm-hm) like that. He says "I'm fortunate." And he would, he would put that kind of money. And the priest the next Sunday would say "I want to thank so-and-so for the generous (F: mm-hm) offering that he gave us, you know. (F: mm-hm) People ah, you know.

F: Do yo belong to any Portuguese-American clubs?

B: Ah--I don't belong to any Portugue--I used to [clears throat] I used to pay all the dues but I never, I never go to them, you know. (F: mm-hm) The only one I, I belong to is the Holy Ghost Sodality. (F: uh-huh) The socie--what would that be--society, Holy Ghost Society. Holy Ghost Society. In fact I'm a, a life member. I know I have it, but I-- [looks through papers] I'm a life member. Yeah. Holy Ghost Society. Life member. (F: oh, yeah, uh-huh) Yeah. I belonged to it so many years that uh they gave me a--I think when you reach seventy (F: mm-hm) or something like that you-- Thank God I reached seventy! (F: yes) [Mr. Barros chuckles] So they--that's the only one. And I belong to the Elks. I belong to the Elks. And I had a friend, he belonged to it and he says "Why don't you belong to it so we can go;" they have parties every month (F: uh-huh) or something like that, (F: uh-huh) you know. And I used to go with my wife and him. (F: mm-hm)

F: You--your son said you used to supply bread for the feast of the Holy Ghost.

B: Yes. We supplied feast for the Holy Ghost far as I can remember. Even--I used to work before I bought--before I opened my bakery, I used to work in this bakery. They used to call it the Lusitania Bakery. And we used to make ah--we used to make all the bread and all the sweet bread for them. And they, they would make a decorated sweet bread. They used to call it [vuschilish, vuschilish?] All decorated--on that decorating--that was my idea of decorating it,

you know. Because they used give it plain, you know. (F: mm-hm) Plain and I used to frost it and make roses on it and, and put on it "From Lusitania Bakery" and then when I, when I bought the bakery--no, when I had my bakery over there-- they used to give me some, some of the business. They used to split it up. (F: uh-huh) And then I would ah, like ah--I would put it "From the Barroses." I'd write on it "From the Barros." Then I had a, a--a granddaughter, you know, and she was--she's--she's partially deaf and I always, I used to make one put it in--her name on it, you know, Justina Barros, you know. And uh--and then one from the bakery, you know. And then uh as the family increased--and then when I bought this baker shop and as the family increased I used to put one--I have a son, Barry; grandson, Barry. I used to put "From Mr. and Mrs. Barros, jr." And then from Mr. Barr--uh Mr.--I used to give four of them. (F: uh-huh) You know four, four of those--

F: One for your son and one for each of the grandchildren?

B: Yeah. (F: yeah?) And, see and one from the bakery, see. (F: yeah) And then that would--they would raffle them off. And if they had two hundred dollars a bread, that would pay their bread. Understand? (F: uh-huh) Because they--they'd auction them or raff--auction them off (F: right) Like auction them. They'd get the highest bidder gets them. Sometimes they's get twenty-five dollars. [phone rings] Because that's supposed to be like a, a blessed thing, you know. (F: mm-hm) And people would--I'm going to buy that in honor of my son or whatnot, or my (F: mm-hm) father or something like that. (F: mm-hm) And then people would make--people also would donate to the Holy Ghost feast--they called the Holy Ghost Feast--they would also donate if they, if they had a sore leg, we'd make a shape of a leg so they could be--get better in the leg, you know. (F: oh, really!) Yeah. And those people would pay for it--pay us to making it, right. And they'd go off and buy it themselves after. Even if--even if they had a bidder. If somebody else had a sore leg, (F: uh-huh) and they were bidding, and they were bidding, and were bidding. And sometimes they'd, they'd have to pay through the nose but they'd still buy it. They'd buy it because that's--they, they, they'd, they wanted it, (F: mm-hm, mm-hm) you know what I mean.

F: Do you still go to the feast?

B: There, there's my wife. Excuse me. (F: o-oh!) Rose, this is the lady that's interviewing me, that.

F: Uhm, let me ask you about other holidays that were celebrated among the Portuguese here in back central Lowell.

B: Well, they--they have--they have the Holy Ghost feast, they have St. Anthony's feast. (F: mm-hm) [sighs] And the, the--years ago they used to have two Holy Ghosts ah--they celebrated two Holy Ghosts. (F: really?) Yeah. But I can't, I can't, I can't recall the names right now.

F: Well, if you can't recall their names, can you recall whether there was anything different about them?

B: No. It, it's, it's the same thing. See, they, they would, they would have the Holy Ghost

ah, celebrated in your house. They pick out names. (F: yeah) And you'd have the Holy Ghost this week, right? (F: mm-hm) And then the other one would have the Holy Ghost--the other one next week, see what I mean? (F: yes) And then when the Holy Ghost feast is on, the both of them would march with the--in the procession. They would make a procession from the Holy Ghost--from the St. Anthony's Church (F: mm-hm) or from their house. From their house to St. Anthony's Church, see? (F: mm-hm, mm-hm) Or else if it was too far, they would just go to the church and then they'd have a, a, a procession around the church. (F: mm-hm) They come ar--stop at the church again, see? (F: mm-hm) But if they lived--sometimes they lived--years ago if they lived near the church they would make the procession, see? But then it got, got to be blocking off so many streets that they uh they just made the procession like from, from the church. You'd bring the, the, the Holy Ghost thing to the church and when they'd come out they'd march from the church (F: uh-huh) down Central Street, up [Elum] Street, down Vernon Street and come down, you know. (F: mm-hm) Like that, see.

F: When people had the Holy Ghost--I take it you mean the crown and the-- (B: the crown, that's it, yeah) in their homes, uhm, did you go to their homes to see it? Did they--

B: Yeah. They would ah--you'd, you'd ah, you'd, you'd pray, you know. You'd pray and there (F: mm-hm) was a certain time you'd pray. And you ah--well people believed in that, you know. See. A lot. And they still do it, they still do it yet. They still do it, they still do that. But then they have uh, uh--

F: Did they have a banner in front of their house?

B: The band. They have a band, yeah.

F: No, a ban--a banner. Do they have--did they, they used to have a banner, out in front of the house?

B: Ah--geez, that I don't know. (F: you don't know) Rose! Rose! Rosie! [yells] When they had the Holy Ghost in the house, do they have a banner outside letting them know they have-- (Rose: no) No. No.

F: Okay. How about other [loud background noise] customs that are Portuguese that you might have had in your home? Were there other things your parents did?

B: Well, they have--they, they, they have a thing when it comes Christmastime. (F: yeah) Christmastime. They, they uh make um--they cut a pork. They uh marinate pork. (F: uh-huh) They call it [speaks Portuguese word] They call it [speaks word again] you know. And it's like a tradition. And everybody has a piece of that you know. Like my wi--my wife still does it. Her mother used to do it, my mother used to do it. And we'd, we'd all go like we'd go her mother's house and then we'd end up by going up to my mother's house, you know.

F: That's marinated in what?

B: Ah, marinated in uh-- Rose! What's the [speaks same Portuguese word] marinated in?

What-- (Rose: Oh, vinegar and water and garlic and pepper and bay leaves. It's a marinade and then you pour it over the pork.)

F: Uh-huh. Vinegar, garlic, bay leaves, what else? (Rose: Allspice.) Allspice. (Rose: You know, the little balls.) Yeah. Right. (Rose: Yeah, the pickling spice.) Okay. Pickling spices. (Rose: You know, a little thing in-- (F: uh-huh, uh-huh) And salt and pepper.) And salt and pepper. And then do you roast it after you marinate it? (Rose: Oh I fry it, you know. I fry it and I put bread on top. And it--you know it goes into the bread and it gives it a nice flavor.) (F: Oh, terrific!) (Rose: Some people don't like it. Like her, she doesn't like it. But my son loves it.) [all laugh and talk]

B: They--And they fight-- [Rose talking in background]

F: Is this your daughter-in-law? (Rose: Yeah) Oh!

B: That's Manny's wife.

F: Oh! Nice to meet you. I interviewed your husband yesterday. (Mrs. Barros: Who--Who is this for, may I ask who--) This is for the Lowell Folklife Project. Let me see if I can find you--

B: I had it on the table there. (Mrs. Barros: Oh, I have a card, yeah. I have it at home.)

F: That's who it's for. Yeah.

B: (Rose: I got to go babysit my brother.) Yeah, okay. (Rose: All right?) I'll see you in a little while, okay? (Rose: All right? [both talk at once] Are you going to be here long?) No, after I finish with the interview. I got to chop some wood, though. Bring that wood in. Okay? (Rose: Yeah.)

F: (Rose: It was nice talking to you.) It was nice to talk to you. (Rose: When you want to see the manger you're welcome.) Thank you. (Rose: If you can find your way up there.) I'll be able to find my way. (Rose: Yeah. (F: yeah) It's not hard. Really.) Okay. (Rose: Don't forget that phone call, Sue.) (Sue: No.) Um, are there other foods that you remember?

B: Well, on that marinated (F: yeah, okay) thing. She, she, she makes it, you know. (F: uh-huh) [lowers voice] I have to make something to to, you know.

F: Oh-- (someone yells in background: You can keep that in the fridge for two weeks--) Okay. (--if you don't use it all at once)

B: And, uh--well, it happens that my friends work at the policemen. (F: uh-huh) Lieutenant P--he's married to a Portuguese. (F: oh) And--and ah, he's always willing to do me a favor. Anything. (uh-huh) Not--I, I--not tickets (F: I understand) or anything like that. I, I--if I do (F: yeah) something wrong I want to-- But ah, he, he loves that and so we have to bring some to him. (F: yeah) Yeah. (F: uh-huh) So--but, you can with that custom that she has, Christmas

custom, she cuts up oranges and you squeeze the orange on top of the juice, the orange juice on top of the meat and-- (F: oh! oh!) It's out of this world! (F: Yeah. It sounds it!) Yeah. I mean I love it. Some people don't like--you know, just like lemons. They squeeze lemon in a lot of food. (F: uh-huh) Fish and things like that. A lot of people don't like it. But I like it. I do, you know. (F: yeah) And uh--That's the only custom I, I can think of right now. Ah--oh, Easter. They usually make the Easter bread. They celebrate with the Easter bread, with eggs. You know, we make big, big pieces of dough and we put eggs in it, you know (F: uh-huh) And we bake it off. You know. (F: uh-huh) Now, the younger generation--at a certain time they get away from it. But as they get older they remember what their folks used to do and they'll come and they'll buy. But when they're young, you know. But when they get matured a little bit longer-- (F: uh-huh) they have children and everything like that, they'll re--"Oh, my father and my mother used to do this, do that", you know. And they'll--they'll order bread with eggs. (F: uh-huh)

F: Is, (B: Some--) is it a sweet bread?

B: It's a Portuguese sweet bread--

F: It's [matsasavata].

B: [Matsavata]. (F: yeah) Are you--you're not Portuguese are you?

F: No, my next door neighbors are.

B: Oh, are they?

F: They keep at me and keep at me. (B: yeah, yeah) They're going to--

B: [Matsasavata, matsasavata]. (F: yeah, mm-hm) I, I, I, I had--you know, you can't think of everything. The [matsasavata]. (F: yeah) And they--that's the tradition. We used to start making that Easter, Easter Sunday, right. We used to start delivering it on a Wednesday, we had so much. (F: oh) When I was a kid, when I was young. (F: uh-huh) There was so much. And there--like I said there was a lot of Portuguese people here. (F: mm-hm) And they were still at that--like sixty, seventy, you know what I mean. And they still had that old thing from the old country because they never made enough money to go back to the old country. They all died. Now, things are better that they come over here in six months and they go back and visit their folks.

F: Uh-huh. They've made enough money in six months?

B: They make--well, (F: yeah) you know, ten dollars a week and twelve dollars a week. They'd have to save money for twenty years (F: mm-hm) to go back and see-- Now, some of them work around the clock. They're making five, six hundred dollars a week. That's him and his wife, you know. (F: mm-hm) They work their sixteen hours. Not everybody. But there's some that will do that. And they--like I told you, we used to make so much and we used to have a bread mixer, a bread mixer and we used to--aach! Mix it for two, three days. (F: mm-hm)

And I started delivering it on a Wednesday. That's how much [matsasavata] we used to make here. In this baker shop here. Because this baker shop, like I said it was the Lusitania Bakery, (F: mm-hm) and as times--as the people were--you know the mills were closing. They emerged with this one, you know. (F: uh-huh) Oh, they sold out to this one. You know. (F: uh-huh) This was the strongest one. And they had it all. And I was deli--I was working here. I started working in the counter, you know. (F: mm-hm) And then when the bread baker--cake baker--you know, kind of left, you know, the one that they were making just very, very few--all they did was cupcakes, (F: mm-hm) cupcakes, that's all. And I was already--knew a little bit more, see. And ah, we started to make more and more and more and deliver, deliver--like I said deliver on a, on a Wednesday, start delivering it.

F: When did you in this bakery stop delivering? You don't deliver anymore, do you?

B: We don't deliver. We--well, ah I see. [pause: 10 sec.] Maybe a good fifteen years. Well, it seems like--I had a baker (F: uh-huh) and a truck driver. And I was the, the other baker, you know. Well, it seemed like the baker and the truck driver were in cahoots. The baker, the baker got sick, the truck driver was sick. Then I'd have to work inside and go out and deliver. (F: uh-huh) You know? I, I cou--at that--I couldn't go right off and--in and get-- (F: mm-hm) And then I used to have--I'd have to take my son sometimes out of school. And the school--they, they didn't have, you know, them days they didn't have no--you had to go to school and that's all. I says, "Well I need him. My baker got sick and this--" "That's not our problem." (F: mmm) And the truant officer would be more strict. (F: mm-hm) If they were strict th--now as they were then (F: yeah) they probably wouldn't be so much trouble (F: yeah) as they are-- (F: uh-huh) it, it is now. But I--they ah--it's always the meek. I was kind of meek, you know. And I was just trying to earn a good living and be, (F: mm-hm) be straight. They used to fall on me--says "You take--we'll have you arrested." So I says one day I just made up my mind. I said--the baker got sick, the truck driver got sick. I went out and delivered. I says we're just finishing Saturday when there's no more deliveries. That day believe it or not I was--oooh it happened front of the church, St. Jean d'Arc Church up on Merrimack Street, you know. (F: uh-huh) I just--from working--I overworked and I just took a fainting spell. (F: oh boy!) I thought this is it. I couldn't move, and there was no way of me getting out of the truck, and the snow was that high. I had to bake. I had to deliver. I said "I can't do it." So that day I went and I, and I stopped it. (F: mm-hm) I couldn't--I was going to kill myself, you know. (F: mm-hm) Because I was trying to make it two jobs and people then (F: yeah) they didn't care. (F: yeah) You know, so, so I didn't--that's the time I decided to-- And you can't--it, it, it's a passe thing. You cannot pay a man--even if you pay a man three dollars, three dollars, see. He goes--climbs the stairs goes up there to the bread and says "Well, um can you get me a half of dozen of doughnuts?" The man comes out and gets a half a dozen doughnuts. "I don't want no bread today. Half a dozen doughnuts." He's wasted a half an hour-- (F: uh-huh) see I'm, I'm, I'm quoting three dollars an hour. (F: uh-huh) It costs him a dollar and a half--it costs me a dollar and a half to--for half a dozen of doughnuts. (F: yeah) Plus the car, the, the truck. (F: uh-huh) Right? (F: yeah) It didn't pay. It couldn't pay. (F: yeah) And then if, if you happen to get--go into a customer's house and the customer wanted "Well, how's your father, how's your mother, how's your sister, how's your aunt?" [interviewer chuckles] (F: mm-hm) It's costing me--then they say "Well, I don't want anything today." (F: mm-hm) You know? (F: uh-huh) And the man--he'd be out in the truck and say "Geez." You'd come back and he's late and somebody says "My husband's

going to work. You haven't got no bread for him." And he's, he's gabbed (F: mm=hm) in some houses for half an hour. (F: mm-hm) It went out the window.

F: So this is already past the time when there's--when you can sell seven hundred loaves of bread-- [both talking]

B: Oh, this is way, way back. [unclear] This is ah--that's when the Depression--the mills started (F: uh-huh) to close and every thing like that. (F: uh-huh) There was no, no way. You, you can't, you can't do it today. Even--after that they even had American bakers had the way of going--delivering house to house, house-- (F: mm-hm) They just had to stop that. (F: mm-hm) They--they couldn't afford it. (F: mm-hm) You know. Even if you--even if it was your own bakery and you, you were working and delivering--if you work for somebody else, you're going to get paid, so why sh--why shouldn't you get paid? (F: mm-hm) You're going to deliver--but you tr--y-you know, you're just killing yourself trying to, trying to make money. And y-you can't do it. You just (F: yeah) can't do it, you know. When I opened my bakery I had a lady tell me--I said--ah-h she asked me "What are you going to do?" I says "Well, I'm going to pay my bills and this and that." "No." She says "No". I says "Why?" She says "If you were working someplace else, at the end of the week what do you get? You get a week's pay. Right?" She said "You--" I never forgot that. A nice lady. She said "You at the end of the week, you take your week's pay out and then you pay your bills. If you have no money to pay your bills, then get out of business." Because a lot of people did the sa--oh, for two years I'm going to put the mon--in business and this (F: yeah, yeah) and that--I'm not going to take any--for two years they put themselves way behind their, their, their house, the (F: mm-hm) payments on their house and this and that and they never catch up. (F: mm-hm) He says that's what you got to--you got to eat, you got to sleep, you got to heat and you got to-- You take your week's pay out first and then you man-- If you don't do it in four months or two months you're losing money. Folds up. And I--that, that's what I did. I started my, my first week I got a week's pay and God was good to me. And I-- (F: and you worked hard) I worked hard for it. But--and--you know, nobody gave it to me. It's just--when you go into business--at that time when you went into business it was just like having a steady job. (F: mm-hm) Buying a job. You bought a business, you bought a job. You knew you were going to get a week's pay. (F: mm-hm) See. Today, people don't have to do. They get--they go into a mill they have all dental, all the benefits. They get this, they get that. We didn't have that. If we didn't save, we wouldn't have it. Is that right? (F: yeah, yeah) It's true. Today, people have a lot of, a lot of benefits. Your father and mother probably never had that. I don't know-- [both talking]

F: My father was in his own business, yeah. That's (B: see?) true. And, and he had to start it. He started it just at the end of the Depression. It was a struggles for him. (B: so, see) Yeah.

B: What kind of business your father in?

F: Ah, it was lubricating oils and greases. (B: oh-h, well) Yeah. So that in a sense he was a, he was a middle man. All of his customers were commercial.

B: Oh yeah. Well, see now your father probably was in a--he was in a better business because machinery and everything like that (F: yeah, yeah) was coming up. They had to use

that. Well, like people say "Well, in the bakery they all got to eat". But you have--there's no more--there's not a business there's more competition than a baker. (F: mm-hm) You go into every supermarket, (F: mm-hm) they got a bakery now. (F: mm-hm) And they get ah--they have people that just, they just make stuff to put in the supermarket. They don't go--they don't want ah some bakers that have ideas. They just make cookies and things like that and put in the bakery shop. And now they're putting in, in ah department stores. (F: mm-hm. That's, that's right.) They're putting into department stores. So just around here, just around here there was this baker shop here, this baker shop here. There was one on the corner. There was one in the back. Right? (F: mm-hm) There was one across the street. (F: wow) There was one right on Charles Street, right? (F: uh-huh) There was two on Gorham Street right there. And there was one in back of Sau--there used to be a Saunders Market. There was one in back of Saunders Market. And then there was two ah right down, down the street here. Now you figure right around here there was ten bakeries. Ten.

F: And they--and for a while they all flourished together?

B: They all flourished together. (F: uh-huh) And then I, I was lucky I, I'm the one that survived here.

F: Uh-huh. And, and were there other kinds of small markets, too?

B: There used to be the A&P markets, they used to call it, Atlantic and-- (F: uh-huh, but it was smaller then?) Th--smaller, oh yeah, smaller. Then they--as they--they got larger ones and all that but they--these like Demoulas started to open up. Alexander's started to open up. (F: yeah) You know they, they, they, they were too big. (F: mm-hm) And they were--got the--see in them days they started to put out a lot of stuff cheaper than the small guy. Right? (F: uh-huh) But now they're, they're--some of them are more expensive than the, the--than if there was a small--and they're buying it cheaper, right? And they're making more money on it, right? (F: right) Because they're going and buying it by the carloads. So it's-- [chuckles]

F: Well, were there, were there more bakeries than there were things like meat markets and fish markets? (B: well--) Because everybody needed bread?

B: Well there just, just over here, too. Now going over here, there was a--two market--one, two-- There was three markets right down the street here. (F: uh-huh) Back Central Street. There was a market right across the street. There was a house there. There was a market right across the street. (F: uh-huh) It's the one before there's a fish market, but there's one where that lot is. (F: yeah) That used to be a market there. There used to be a market over there. And there used to be a little market right on this side here. (F: uh-huh) That's what I recall.

F: Did people have markets in their homes, too? Like living in back of or up over the market?

B: Ah, they, that's--there used to be some. Because like this, this here is a house converted into a bakery. (F: oh, uh-huh) See, this used to be a, a house, and they converted it into a bakery. Now I, I cut that back there. See the--that's like an alley and I made it so I could make



the bakery a little bigger (F: uh-huh) because it's too narrow. (F: uh-huh) And ah, there was some places that had--but I, I can't just recall right now. I think there was two, two markets right here, here. There was two markets right here on Charles Street. Was a house. (F: uh-huh) Yeah. Two, two, two of them right here. Yeah, I recall that. S-see now, like us, we have a, a, a reely--a reel oven, right? (F: yeah!) Uh, reel means arou-- (F: be r-e-e-l, yeah, yeah, uh-huh) Yeah. Yeah. And uh, now years ago we had ah a peel oven (F: oh! where you reach in--) One of the--hearth oven, hearth oven, yeah. (F: uh-huh) Now, the hearth oven used to come as far as this post here. See? (F: uh-huh. About ten feet further. Maybe) Yeah. (F: yeah) And we had that peel. Now that peel used to go as far as the sink here. (F: oh!) Nobody could--you couldn't work here. A lot of times I, I, I used to poke my, my wife and try to beat [interviewer laughs] me in order to going. She's coming down to get some bread and I used to poke her, I--o-oh (F: o-oh) See, I, I feel, I used to feel sorry, you know. And uh, used to be by coke. Then we converted it to oil. See. I had pictures--

F: Is it oil now?

B: Uh, it's gas.

F: It's gas now.

B: Gas now. And when my son come in with me, you know. He was working for me you know. He says "Pa, why don't get rid of that". My hands--from the peel I couldn't open my hands. My hands were like that. (F: o-oh!) You know the peel, you know. (F: yeah) They were burned, calluses, you know. (F: o-oh!) [laughs] They were like that. Even, even today they, they, they c--I have a hard time straightening them out. They always go like--have a tendency to [interviewer laughs] come like that. And uh, we used to--but we used to make from, from Friday nights seven until two, three Saturday morning, we used to sell anywhere from eight hundred loaves of bread to a thousand loaves of bread on a Saturday. (F: oh boy!) Over the counter. (F: oh boy!) See when we used to deliver it, we used to deliver it better. We didn't have no businees over here. (F: uh-huh) The minute I stopped delivering, we started to have business. (F:uh-huh) But things were changing a little bit, too, you know. People were--one here, one there were buying a car, you know. Like now, well now today everybody--if you got four in the family four--there's four cars outside, you know. (F: yeah) But in them days uh--and then people would walk. I remember, I remember when I used to work--I used t--like I said I used to work with these guys, they were Lusitania. It used to be like a parade going down the street. People with their, with their lunch box, lunch thing like that. (F: mm-hm) They'd come in and buy a loaf of bread and cut (F: mm-hm) it in half and put-- (F: mm-hm) thing like I said a little while ago. (F: mm-hm) And coming back at five o'clock it's be--well, no matter where's the store people were walking. You know, they were going into the stores. (F: mm-hm) But today, people get in--they go to work in the car to come back in the car t-, t-, t-- (F: yeah) You, you don't have that. (F: yeah) But used to be--

F: You must have seen every body in the neighborhood then, practically every day.

B: Oh! I used to see a lot of them, I used to deliver a lot of them. I was married about a hundred times. Every time-- [both laugh] these people'd say "I want you to marry my daughter, I

want you to marry my daughter, I want you to marry my daughter." Because I went into, into their houses when I was a young kid, you know. (F: mm-hm) Young, young boy. So they, they used to know me, you know. (F: mm-hm) I, when I opened my baker shop, I didn't even advertise. They just said--they just knew that I was going to open a bakery and they came to me. (F: mm-hm) The-uh, this is the gods' truth, you know. And uh, [people laughing and making lots of noise in background] we didn't have no, we didn't, we didn't have no trouble. Not trouble at all. Because I used to deliver bread with--started with my father, going (F: mm-hm) house to house. My father had a baker shop of his own. H-h-he, like he was the same way, h-he was president of societies. He formed a society because people couldn't be buried. They didn't have no money to be buried. So they, they formed a society, a dollar a month. (F: uh-huh) You know? (F: uh-huh, uh-huh) And ah--

F: Was there, was there a name for that society?

B: [Madeiran Al-alienza]. (F: uh-huh) [Madeiran Alienza]. Something like that. I can't think of the whole name. (F: uh-huh) And they still got his picture in the club. Some club up here, you know. And people didn't have no money to get buried. So if they had five hundred members when they ah, when there was somebody deceased, somebody died, they would have to pay one dollar more to help pay and (F: uh-huh, I see) they, like they would give uh was either a thousand dollars or something like that to help pay that--there was no insurance. (F: mm-hm) There was nothing, (F: mm-hm) see. And uh, my father helped, helped form one of those societies. (F: ah-huh) My father had a good, good penmanship. Oh, he could write like you thing. He was, he was an intelligent man. I don't know what schooling he had, you know what I mean. I didn't know what schooling he had. (F: mm-hm) But uh, eh, people used to look up to him and he used to go like to Immigration and talk to a, for a lot of people, you know, that they came, you know. He would, he would go, you know, (F: mm-hm) and help them and take the American papers and things like that. (F: oh! uh-huh) But they--I only, I only had him until I was fifteen years old. Yes, yeah. He was very good to me; very, very, very good to me. I could ask him for--in them days a nickel was a lot of money, but "I want a nickel for an ice cream," "I want a nickel for a hot dog." (F: yeah) The man would se--never say no. He never said no to me. He'd get up at two o'clock in the morning and go and deliver bread, and I would follow him. Many a time--right here, we used to live on Charles Street down here, (F: uh-huh) and I'd be following him--the police officer said "Sir, if you wake up that boy to go with you at two o'clock I'll have you arrested." I says, he says "I don't call him, he gets up." I used to, I used to ah I-like my father. I use to go with him all the time.

F: Did--you said your father came here to work in the mills?

B: Yeah.

F: What--how old was he when he came [both talking]

B: Geez, I, I wouldn't--

F: You wouldn't know?

B: I wouldn't know, see. To tell you the truth. Well--

F: But he wasn't a child?

B: No. See, now he was fifty, I think he was fifty-one, when I was fifteen. (F: mm-hm) So, he, he was here a very, very short time before I was born. So fifteen, be thirty-five huh? Thirty-five, thirty-four. I'd say he's, he was around thirty years old when he came from the old country. (F: mm-hm) [pause: 10 sec.] I uh--

F: Well, um and did, did he meet your mother here, or--

B: No, they were married in the old country. (F: uh-huh) They were married in Madeira. They have different, like uh villages, provinces, whatever you want to call them. Villages, you know. And he came from one, one--I don't know if, if he came from the and my mother came the place called . Different, different (F: uh-huh) names. (F: uh-huh) Now the, your Portuguese people would probably know that. What, what part of the Portug-Portugal do they come, those Portugue--

F: Almost all of them are from the Azores.

B: From the Azores, huh?

F: Uh-huh. And then there's kind of a, a mixture, (B: yeah) but mostly St. Miguel. It seems like.

B: St., St. Miguel, yeah. (F: yeah, mm-hm) The St. Miguels, ah, they're good to sing, they c--what they call , you know. They're (F: uh-huh, uh-huh) very, very, very good. I, I, I used to go someplace, New Bedford or something like that, there's quite a few of them out there. There's s-some from all over, but they were the ones with the best--I used to think that they used to sing the , you know what I'm talking about? (F: yes) Though they sing, (F: yes) they answer each other.

F: O-o-h yes! (B: yeah) They, and then they make it up as they go along?

B: Yeah, they make (F: yeah, yeah) They think that these um, ah country song, country music-- If these people ever wrote th-some of those lyrics, these old-timers that died, if they wrote those lyrics, which were the pure ones, you know what I'm talking about? (F: uh huh) They didn't have television. To bring it up, these are things brought up from their own minds, you know. (F: right, uh-huh) They would make these songs look sick. I remeber that. (F: yeah) I remember delivering bread to man, he used to live way up in back, back to Lowell Cemetery, he had a house way, way in. He was an old man and I was just a kid. And he says "You know, Emmanuel," he says, "my grandfather--" now he's an old man and he's his grandfather, (F: mm-hm) he says "There's going to be a thing that's going to carry people from Portugal to America." Now there's a man that [interviewer laughs] never read, never read, never knew--huh? (F: yeah) He, he must have had--tell me how a man like that could think.

F: Well, I, do you know I think he was thinking independently as if, (B: see) I mean, if he'd had the position, he would have been an inventor of something like an airplane.

B: Yeah, see. (F: yeah) He says something that's going to bring people from--they don't have to go in boats, (F: no) take months, (F: yeah) it's going to go--fly! (F: yeah) And he was an old man. I never (F: yeah) forgot that, never forgot that. I used to say that (F: uh-huh) to my teacher in school a lot of times I used to say that. I don't know, I think I talk too much.

F: Oh! I don't think you talk too much. [Mr. Barros laughs] This is wonderful! Are you, are you--

B: See, it's a--

F: --getting ready to stop now?

B: No! I mean ask me questions. If I can answer them, ah when I'm all done, I'll go and ask my daughter-in-law, she talks a lot. [both laugh]

F: A-ahm, let me think. Oh, yeah, there was--I wanted to ask you um, um another thing about your father. If he came here to work in the mills, did he then work for somebody else's bakery and then buy it or--

B: Well, he, he was working in the mills, and then this--there was a fellow, like I told you, one of the cousins or something like that, that stayed in the house. He became a partner in here. (F: oh! uh-huh) Somehow or other, see, he, he was a worker and he was single, he had money, and, and I think in them days you could buy a partnership like fifteen hundred dollars or something like (F: mm-hm) that, see. And he bought a partner, partner here, and he asked my father if he wanted to. And my father started--you know--helped over here, yeah. And then something happened, my father left, then my father opened his own bakery way up in, in the Greek, it was in the Greek territory. There was, there was a baker shop there. (F: mm-hm) See.

F: Is that The Acre? Is that what they call The Acre?

B: No, ah-- [yells] What would they call the Greek section? Not The Acre, huh? [woman talks in background] The Acre th-- (Second woman: The Acre originally was the Greek section.) Yeah. (First woman: The Acre was the what?) (Second woman: the Greek section, wasn't it?) (First woman: Oh, yeah! I come from The Acre.)

F: You do?

B: [yells] Around uh Adams Street, Adams Street, Lewis Street? That The Acre? [response unclear] Yeah, okay. So my father, he came from that--he opened a baker shop (F: ah-huh) there. Well, he was, he was just a delivery man, so he hired two guys that were related to these guys here. (F: uh-huh) And he was selling a lot of bread. Oh, he was taking so many customers away these people here. (F: ah-huh) So my father one morning went, went to the--

[end of tape]

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B: He ah, these fellows were in cahoots with him, like you know. (F: uh-huh) And they were relatives or something like that, so they paid him off and they, they burnt, they burnt the whole bread. It happened I think in two days, two times in a row that the bread was burnt. So my father--he had to come--there's, there was another baker. He had to get like fifty breads off one, (F: uh-huh) fifty breads off another, (F: yeah) or something like that. And, they did it twice or three times and then my father closed. Closed the bakery.

F: And then what did he do?

B: He went back to the mill. I used to--them days you, you bring lunches, and I used to bring the lunch to my father. Used to call it the Massachusetts Mills where (F: uh-huh) I think it's where the Lowell, the old post office is. Right across the Hilton, I think. (F: oh yeah, yeah) I think, (F: yeah) I think that's the Massachusetts-- you know I kind of-- (F: yeah, uh-huh) He worked in the Appleton and he worked in the Massachusetts Mill. (F: uh-huh) I used to bring lunches to him there, you know. My mother used to make a lunch and I used to bring the lunch to him. Then he got, he got sick. He, he got ah, pneumonia.

F: From working in the mill?

B: No. He, he got--no, he, he--I don't know what happened there. I think uh, uh, I think he was still working there. I think he was still working. And he got sick. (F: uh-huh) You know, he got sick and uh, and then he had a toothache or something like that and he, he was getting better. Doctor says "I can't take you to--until ah, until ah you feel better." So he, he thought he felt better, he had his tooth pulled and he, he got a relapse, (F: oh!) and he shouldn't have done it, (F: yeah) shouldn't have done it, but-- [pause: 5 sec.]

F: So then you didn't go right into a bakery from, from your father's bakery?

B: No. My father already had, (F: had l--) had left, he had left it all. (F: yeah, mm-hm) Because he come over here and then the mills were closing. More mills were closing and he ah, he, he got out. He got out and uh-- A lot of times things happen, you don't know--I mean I, I don't know what hap-, what ah happened, I don't know what he, he, th-th, wh-what ah, I think he, they paid him, they bought his partner, part of, you know. (F: uh-huh) Because he was no baker. He was a salesman. (F: ah-huh) And see, they all, and they had to, when they emerged with this one here, they had two or three of them outside. (F: uh-huh) They'd been out there for years, see. (F: uh-huh) So ah, he, he just left, took his money and left and then he got, like I say, he got sick and ah, he got pneumonia and he died.

F: Did--growing up did you want to be a baker? Di-was that your--

B: I uh, always had [chuckles] intention to be a baker. (F: mm-hm) Because I, I, I always worked my, with my father and I worked with this, worked uh-- [tells someone who interrupts that the person he is looking for has left through the back door] So we ah--what are we talking about?

F: Oh! Ah, we were talking about you wanting to be a baker [both talk]

B: Oh yeah. Well, I used to deliver bread house to house like I told you. (F: mm-hm) The baker, which the one of these partners--they had five partners here, see. (F: uh-huh) I was working here and, and I uh, I used to work on the counter, and then a baker got sick, I come inside and started to read, you know, formulas and started to make cakes. And ah, then one of the partners went away to the old country. He says "I'm going to go to the old country". He says "I want you to bake inside and do, do the, the route," (F: mm-hm) you know. So I started to learn the route, you know. And root or route, whatever you call--

F: Whichever. (B: wh-I, I don't know--) I know what you mean.

B: Yeah. What do they call it, root, huh?

F: It would depend--you know, it really depends on which part of the country you're from.

B: Yeah? Oh.

F: Yeah. [both talk]

B: Well, anyways. I'll, I was starting to deliver house to house something-- [both laugh] When I started to deliver house to house, I met this fellow, he, he was ah, ah, well in them days you call them like a section man in the mill. There used to be the Lowell Silk Mills in Lowell, see. (F: uh-huh) And he was a section man, you know. He's ah, very, very nice. His name was Lawrence, Frank Lawrence. And ah, I says to him--he says to me "What do you intend to be when you grow up?" When--I says "I'll never grow up. I'm going to be short." He says "When you get older." He say--I says "Well, I want to be a baker." He says--I say "I want to own my own bakery." He says "Don't wait until you're too old." So I says "Okay." So I made up--I don't know how the heck it was. I was work--oh, then I worked two, three years in ah [Brockeman's], a little longer probably, in [Brockeman's] Market. (F: mm-hm) They had a baker shop. A big, big bakery. And I, I was one of the top bakers there, you know. And ah, I was working there and ah, it goes up Gorham Street, it goes up Gorham Street and there's a empty baker. The baker shop closed. I went inside to the--ask the guy "I'd like to start a bakery." He says "Okay." He says "I'll do this, I'll do that, I'll make it bigger for you. I say "How much you going to charge me?" He says "Well, sixty dollars a month," you know for rent. I says "Hmmm." I says "Well, I'll see." This guy across the street had a bakery and he says "What do you want to do first, open a bakery?" I says "Yeah." "I'll sell you mine." [both laugh] So, so ah I get in business for a thousand dollars. [both laugh] So I bought the bakery, you know. I bought the baker shop and then I got, which was very, very important, was the sugar ration. You know, you had to have a, a, a ration?

F: Yeah, I remember, I remember. Going for ration coupons, yeah.

B: Yeah. So I had, I had a chance to buy it. Sugar ration. And his baker shop was named Veterans' Bakery. That's a good name. I says "Oh, that's a good name." See. So I got--I couldn't buy it. Because I had to be a, a veteran. I was not a veteran. I was deferred so many times. I had deferment tickets [unclear] (F: hmmm) Because I was a, claimed essential. I wanted to go. (F: mm-hm) And they wouldn't let me go. This is gospel truth. I went to the um, oh it's called the board, draft board. (F: dra--yeah) The draft board. I say "I want to go." I say "I want, I want to come back and I want to get a good job. I want to be a baker in a, in a hospital or in a government hospital and get all the benefits--no benefits at that time you know-- (F: yeah) get all the benefits and every thing like that. It can't--you're claimed essential. You're claimed--the boss, the owner of the b-the boss or the owner of the [Brockeman's] Market said "All the bakers are gone. The on--you're the only one now left there," he says, "and a, a couple more, and we need you." We, we, y-, y--the people working in ah, ah in the places, they need, they need bread they (F: mm-hm) need this and that. (F: mm-hm) You had to have somebody to make bread for them, you know. (F: mm-hm) So, I didn't--I couldn't go, see. So, there I was. You asked--I get mixed up there a little bit now. What were you talking about first? When you--

F: Oh I was just--we were, we were talking about you going into the bakery business.

B: Yeah. (F: yeah) And then, that's when I went up, I went up I says "I--wh-I can't go." I went up to and I asked the guy about the ration I--but I couldn't go where I was no veteran. So I had to call my brother-in-law, you know, and make him a partner. (F: uh-huh) But it was just a partner in name. I (F: mm-hm) put it in a, a lawyer's office. (F: mm-hm) I had to make him fifty-one percent owner, (F: wow) and I was forty-nine percent (F: uh-huh) owner, see. (F: mm-hm) So I could get the thing or else I would never get into business. (F: mm-hm) And so, from there, after a certain time, my brother-in-law, he wanted to go out. He wanted to--he went into the Marines. No, he already h- he already had--this is already come back. Yeah, he ca-he came back because he was wounded. He wanted to go into post office, you know. (F: mm-hm) And then he couldn't get into post office. Then he opened up his own business, oil business. Th- so I stayed with the whole, the whole shebang, but I already had so many years that-- (F: mm-hm) I think the sugar ration was already gone. You (F: mm-hm) didn't have to. Or I was established that I could get it, (F: mm-hm) you know what I mean. (F: mm-hm) I could the thing so-- And I stayed and then one day this guy approached me. He wanted, he was going--this baker shop was, was falling apart, see. I was on Gorham Street. This baker shop was kind of--the guy couldn't handle it. (F: mm-hm) He's a good s--

F: This is the Lusitania.

B: Yeah, the Lusitania. Couldn't handle it because he didn't know br-cakes and things like that. All he knew was the, he was a bread baker and delivery, good delivery man. (F: mm-hm) Good uh--so he asked me if I wanted to buy it. So I bought it for sixteen thousand dollars at that time. (F: mm-hm) So it must be twenty-nine, thirty years ago or suh-in, in that vicinity. The day I bought it--no, a week after I bought it somebody approached me, wanted to give me twenty-five thousand dollars for it. I would have made six thousand dollars. I says to my wife "What do you say, would you make six thousand dollars, would I--" She says "No." So, so we

kept it, so we kept it, we kept it all that time. (F: mm-hm) But she worked, my wife worked side by side. And some people say well, she was bossy. But I h-had to have somebody. I had to have somebody push me, and (F: ah-huh) she, she's a pusher. (F: ah-huh) That's why I never handle the money. That's why (F: uh-huh) we have what we have, see. (F: mm-hm) Because ah she's, because she was that way. If she was too easy or she was the type that (F: mm-hm) went out and spent money on clothes and this and that, you know, but she was never the type. (F: mm-hm) If I say we're going to save ten, she'll save twenty, you know. So, that's--But ah we never went without. We never traveled, but we always had a, a Cadillac. We always had a-- I have a junk for my ah little city car, like you know. (F: mm-hm) But we got a Caddy in the garage. (F: mm-hm) And that--if you travel, you spend four thousand, three thousand. You go four times, you got the price of a Caddy. (F: yeah) See, so the people that travel haven't (F: uh-huh) got a Caddy. The-th-- (F: uh-huh) we have a Caddy. (F: uh-huh) That, that's the only thing--that's the enjoyment we had out of life. (F: uh-huh) And we have a good family so we ah--that's what--she doesn't like to travel. And well, just like now an airplane is tipped upside down someplace, you know. (F: yes, yeah, yeah) Ah, when we, we went to Jamaica once, we went to Las Vegas three times, we went to ah Bermuda three times. And then after that we were tr-airplane, DC-10 and the motor fell off of it. (F: yeah) DC-10 this-- Uh we, we went to, the last time we went to Jamaica, yeah, the last trip we made with Jamaica, coming back we was on a DC-10, and she didn't say one word until we hit Lowell. She was afraid, (F: yeah, yeah) she was afraid. So, she says "You can go if you want to. I-I don't want you to go, but if you want to go, go. I don't want to--I'm scared. What's the sense of me going on--ah, ah I'm scared and I, (F: mm-hm) I don't feel good and--" but she hasn't, she--I says "You don't feel g--" She hasn't felt good for a long time, too, she's ah, she's been sick.

F: Well--

B: Keep asking me more.

F: Yeah! Well um, let me ask you about something that isn't just about you, but it, there still is a Portuguese band in Lowell, is that right? Are any of (F: yeah) your friends in it?

B: No, I don't--ah that, see, it's a, it's a different ah generation, (F: uh-huh) you know, that, that come in. (F: uh-huh) And ah, ah I wouldn't know. (F: okay) See, I wouldn't (F: uh-huh) know--I know there is a band. (F: uh-huh) I know there is a band. But ah, it's a different eh group. See, all my group is ah, I kn-once in a while I'll see them in the baker shop, "Hi, hiya Barry, hi, hi." And they, they'll wave at me, (F: uh-huh) you know. They'll say "You're still at it. Gee, you're still at it." I says, I says "What do you want me to do, hang round barrooms? I says "That's probably why I, I'm seventy-four, I'm still hanging around." I says "I don't--" A-it's a different-- I know they h--they still, they still have a band. I even joined a band. I started, first I started with a violin, (F: uh-huh) and then gave that--ah c--the bakery business didn't leave me--ah, eh, y-I--you're married to it. (F: uh-huh) You're home and somebody'll say "Gee, I forgot a birthday cake couldn't you--" you know, (F: oh, yeah) this and that, see. Ah, you're home Sundays uh say "Jesus, ah, you know, my, my son--" ah this and that. In them days, you know. In th-I'm talking about them days. (F: uh-huh) Now there's a baker shop ah, eh--Demoulas has, you know, they have birthday cakes, they have (F: yuh) this and that. But, we were like a community bakery, you know, and uh s-I, I'm, I was home, and my wife never said no.



F: So people would call you at home--

B: Call me at home. Th-and, and I'd, I, I'd, I'd be Sunday sometimes you eh, eh--make them, come down and make a cake. You know, I'd always have some cakes baked off, you know. (F: uh-huh) Or if I didn't have a baked off, I'd have a sheet cake. I'd cut it in half and put it together, and decorate it and--I never said no. My wife never said no, you know. (F: uh-huh) So we'd always ah, always have a cake. Even when we worked for the other fellow. I used to live three or four houses u-up-- They'd go up my house and get me to make a cake, (F: uh-huh) you know. Uh, even bir-wedding cakes I've gone as far as make uh--get up, get up early on a Sunday morning, and make a wedding cake, and, and cool it off and deliver it. Uh, m-decorate it and deliver it, (F: mm-hm) you know.

F: Who made your wedding cake when you got married?

B: I made my own. [laughs]

F: You made your own. [laughs]

B: But I mean, ah, see, see, decorating--see when I used to decorate a cake, I used--decorating it--they used to consider pretty good. But the way people decorate a cake now, it makes my decorating look sick, you know what I mean. Because it, it's more fancier, it's (F: uh-huh) more thing, it's more, you know, it is--uh, uh, uh it is. Like my, my daughter-in-law, she, she went to school to learn how to decorate. My son, too. They, they'll (F: uh-huh) decorate a cake that--I, I don't want to decorate a cake, you know (F: uh-huh, uh-huh) what I mean. I don't feel like decorating a cake there, because mine--you could decorate a cake any old way. "Oh, jesus," people say, "ah--" they--you know. They didn't see so many. But now, they go here, they go to, ah there's so many places they go and they see wedding cakes all over. (F: right) And they, they'll see this and they'll see fountains and everything like that, y-- (F: yeah) I used to make my own one time with steps, I made a steps, you know. But i-it was steps. (F: uh-hm) But I mean ah, if they make a steps they're going to make it l--artistic, you know what I mean. (F: yeah, yeah) Eh, th-, because there's so many around and they, they look at this and they look at that, and they better theirs all the time, see. (F: mm-hm) So mine makes them look--theirs make mine look sick. [both laugh] And I admit it, you know. (F: mm-hm) I admit it, see, I admit it, you know. Because in them days you could decorate a cake ah (F: mm-hm) any old way, you know. (F: mm-hm)

F: Well, is there anything else that I should know about the Portuguese neighborhood here, that you know?

B: Well, years ago the Portuguese people that came from the old country, they wanted their kids to work. You know.

F: They didn't want them to go to school you mean?

B: The majority of them. (F: yeah?) But there was some that say "My--want my kids to get-

-have an ed--my boys or my (F: mm-hm) children to have an education. (F: mm-hm) See? Now, nowa-, nowadays they still have some that come but they want, they haven't, they, they, they're going to school, night school. (F: uh-huh) They go to night school. There are still some that are hungry for, for money. They want to--they say "Well, what am I going to do? Go to college and spend this and that, and I'm not going to get nothing out of it." But there is--they, and they are some that came from the Azores and Madeira, or something like that. They had schooling and they went right into school, a school system. They have uh-- [yells] What's, excuse me, what's that Laura's Inn that ah-- (woman in background: It's a bilingual program.) Bilingual. (F: mm-hm) They go bilingual. And they, they--also there was a fellow that came from Port--from Madeira. Came from Madeira Island. He was a, a musician. He even had his own band. (F: mm-hm) And he went into the school system, he took out a--I think he, he's--I don't know if he's Americanized already. (F: mm-hm) He's been here for quite a while. Both him and his wife, and they're teaching music. Now that's two that I know. (F: mm-hm) And then, and these other bi-bilingual, she says? (F: yeah) They, they, they teach, they, they help the kids--

F: They help them to learn English?

B: Learn English, yeah. So, so that's--

F: Your father and mother must have wanted you to go to school, right?

B: They couldn't--they, they couldn't--

F: They couldn't?

B: There was no--

F: So you were--

B: There was no, no money. There was no money around. I, I worked, I worked when I was going to school. I used to deliver bread before I went to school and I used to deliver bread (F: yeah) after school-- (F: yeah)

F: But you went to school.

B: I went to schoo--I went as far as the--I took, I got as far as the one year in night school, night high. (F: mm-hm) I graduated from the Butler School, they call it, the ninth grade. (F: uh-huh) And I went as far as uh, I went um, one more year in, in Lowell High and then they didn't have no money to, to graduate. I went two years, (F: mm-hm) night high. They didn't have no, no ah money to--the school systems, you know with the teacher-- (yeah) And, and the school stopped,

F: The school stopped?

B: Yeah. So I, I would have, I would have graduated the night school. (F: ah-huh, ah-huh)

One more--a few more months. (F: mm-hm) It started then ah something happened ah-- (F: ah-huh) Then it--and then I think they opened up again and I says "Aw." You know, you get dis- (F: mm-hm) disgusted, you know. (F: mm-hm) But ah thank God I didn't, I didn't need it, you know what I mean. But ah--and I only had one, one boy; we only had one boy, Manny, you see. And uh, we, we tried to force him to go to school. He, he went as far as a Boston University, Boston (F: yeah) University. He graduated. He says "Now look, Pa and Ma. this is as far as I'm going to go. I'm not a, a scholar. If I, I want, I want you to know I appreciate your trying to send me to school." He says "But this is as far as I'm going to go. I'm not a, a, a scholar," you know. (F: mm-hm) A guy who--a genius, eh he says, so--we did pretty good. (F: ah-huh) I mean ah--

F: So at that point he came in the business with you?

B: Yeah. He came in the business and then I dis--I was, when I was sixty-two I had ah, I had two hernias, you know. And ah--three hernias. I had a-- (F: wow) bic-bilical, ah bilica, (F: yeah, yeah I know) belly button (F: yeah) And uh, two--and I didn't know, but she said ah, I had, I thought I had emphysema. I sneezed and sneezed and sneezed and sneezed, and I--op--you know, opened myself up. And uh I had Dr., doctor just died a short time ago, Dr. [Tai]. He knew I had to lift or drag bags and he put like a web, (F: ah-huh) it's like a web. I never had any trouble. I bowl and everything like that. (F: oh yeah?) Never had any more trouble (F: uh-huh) with it. I still lift--I can lift up a hundred pounds yet, my age. (F: oh boy) Yeah. So.

F: So at that point you sold the business to him?

B: Eh when I was sixty-two (F: yeah) I says, I was kind of, you know. Y-can--I came to a point where I had, I had worked hard all my life, you know and I says "Look, I'm going to sell it." And he s--so he says "I'll buy it." So I said what the hell. (F: mm-hm) Then I sold the building, you know. So that gives me a little check every month. So that's my social security, (F: ya-huh) you know. (F: uh-huh) And my wife, she still likes to work, but she's been sick, you know. She, she's had a cold and uh, she-e-e, she gets tired, you know. I said "Rose, what do you want to work for? Take that check; enjoy yourself with it." You know. But she can't keep still. She (F: uh-huh) wants to work. She-e-e--if a dust falls and she cleans if (F: yeah) before it f-- (F: yeah) touches the--I, I had to write a note this morning, I get up early this morning and I, I lit up the--I have a st-wood stove and a-a porch, a (F: yeah) nice porch all large windows; and I--it was quarter of seven--I lit the thing then. Naturally wood always leaves a little thing there. I opened up the, the thing that put ah some wood in some--sss--not ss--uh black stuff come out of there and I, I swept a little bit. So I left a note, I says "When I come back from the bake shop I'll sweep, I'll sweep the porch for you." [both laugh] She has a fit. So--

F: Well, maybe we should wrap this up now. And I'd like to ask you, are, are you, either you or Manny, jr. going to be in tomorrow?

B: I'll ah, I'll be here tomorrow, yeah in the morning though.

F: Yeah. The reason is that I'm going to be in the neighborhood with our staff photographer. And he's a much better photographer than I am, so can he come in and take a cou-

-a few photographs?

B: it's a good thing because I didn't shave. [both laugh] No, but see ah, ah, I don't know what time your photographer comes in, see. See I come in at five o'clock in the morning and (F: uh-huh) nine o'clock he, he sends me home, see.

F: Nine o'clock he send you home. Who sends you home?

B: My son. (F: oh) So, he doesn't want me to work-- (F: uh-huh) Then that's enough; that, that's (F: yeah) all I want. (F: yeah) Nine, ten o'clock, y-you know. (F: yeah) And that's ah--I don't want to work eight, nine, ten, twelve hours ah-- (F: sure) you know. (F: sure) I, I've done it-- (F: sure) I'll do it. If he needs me, like yesterday he needed me, I, I come in (F: yeah) and (F: uh-huh) I work, see. (F: uh-huh) I'll work, because (F: yeah) i-if he says ah, you know, I'll work. But I mean ah--it's to make an appointment, what time your, your photogra--

F: Well, actually it's going to be between ten and eleven that we're going to be here. Is that too late?

B: Well, I'll, I'll ah--if I go home, all he has to do is just call me, I, because I'll come down in ten minutes. (F: oh!) Takes five, ten minutes. (F: okay) All right?

F: Okay. Fine. Because I'd like to get some good pictures of you; and maybe we can get one of you at the oven.

B: Well, I've--have you got a clean, white hat for me? [both chuckle]

F: Okay, I'm going to turn this off now. (B: yeah)