

Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Research Center

Transcript of an  
Oral History Interview with  
HENRIK A. HARTMANN  
Norwegian, Engineer, Swedish Army, World War II  
2000

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**Hartmann, Henrik A.**, (1920?-). Oral History Interview, 2000.

User Copy: 2 sound cassette (ca. 80 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 80 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Video Recording: 1 videorecording (ca. 80 min.); ½ inch, color.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

**Abstract:**

Henrik Hartmann, a native of Norway, discusses his World War II experiences with the Swedish Army. He tells how the Germans closed down the university in Oslo (Norway) where he was in medical school. While away from school on a ski trip, he describes how the Germans began to conscript Norwegian students into the German Army and his decision not to return to school. He talks about being in contact with the resistance movement, doing maneuvers in the woods, and getting a fake passport along with other refugees at a church. He discusses crossing the border into Sweden and relates his attempt to enter a Swedish medical school, being sent to a “police camp” where he got some military training, and joining a Norwegian engineering battalion in the Swedish Army. Hartmann comments on ski trooper training, building roads near the Norwegian border with Finland, staying in tents because the Germans had burned down the houses in northern Norway, and the lack of rations for his unit. He talks about clearing mines from Norwegian air bases, and he tells of shooting down a plane that looked German but that actually contained Swedes on a rescue mission. After the war ended, he describes being in charge of clearing a German military camp. Hartmann touches upon the German occupation of Norway, pay and equipment, buying reindeer meat from Laplanders to supplement their rations, and how his unit illegally got hold of alcohol. Hartmann examines relations between Norway and Sweden during the war and debates whether Sweden collaborated with Germany. He says his current neighbor was in the United States Air Force and airdropped food and supplies to Hartmann’s unit. He talks about returning home and finishing medical school in Oslo. He speaks of coming to the United States to do a residency, staying because he fell in love and got married, getting a two year service credit from the Selective Service Act for serving in an allied army, and continuing to be an active skier.

**Biographical Sketch:**

Hartmann was a medical student in Oslo, Norway when the Germans closed his university during World War II. He became part of the resistance movement and fled to Sweden where he signed up with an engineering battalion. After the war’s end he finished his medical degree, attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison for a residency, and settled in Wisconsin.

Interviewed by James McIntosh, 2000.

Transcribed by Hannah Goodno, 2009.

Corrected by Channing Welch and Katy Marty, 2010.

Abstract by Susan Krueger, 2010.

**Interview Transcript:**

[starts abruptly]

Jim: Medical school, did you continue even though the war had started?

Henrik: I finished the first year, and then they started—and then we were doing anatomy. At this point, the Germans closed the university.

Jim: Right. Now they came over—in what? In '41? Or '40?

Henrik: Yah, they—the Germans occupied Norway 9th of April, 1940.

Jim: '40. Yes.

Henrik: Yah.

Jim: Those (??) Germans? And did they stop the medical school then?

Henrik: Not immediately. But after awhile they realized that there were a lot of resistants, you know, members of the resistance movement among the students. So then they very dramatically closed the university. Yah. And I can't exactly remember what date that was but I know it was on a Monday. Because I had been out skiing on Sunday. (Laughs.) I got this luckily got this telephone call saying, "Don't come down to the university." – I don't know who called, but, "Don't come down to the university."

Jim: Where was the university?

Henrik: It was actually in Oslo. Right downtown, yah. And, what happened then—the Germans rounded up all the guys they could get ahold of. Even though at the university hospital you know, some of the students jumped into bed pretending they were patients. (Laughs.) So then they lined up everybody. Picked out about half of them, and there was first put in some sort of prisons in Oslo. And they were sent to Germany as—well the Germans didn't call it prison, they said, "You are the Aryan race so you can be—you can go and fight for Germany." And then—this is just hearsay because I wasn't there in Germany, they said, "Everybody who wants to, go and fight." Everybody got tattooed with SS you know—

Jim: An SS tattoo?

Henrik: Yah, on their arm. All the guys that were prisoners. Then they said that everybody wants to go to the east front and fight, take one step forward. Nobody took a step forward.

- Jim: Right.
- Henrik: But this—I was not part of that, see I was left back in Norway. So I continued in the resistance movement then.
- Jim: Well, you were up skiing when they—so you didn't—I mean, they didn't, that's why they didn't catch you.
- Henrik: Yah, right, right. Yah and after that they had very good files. So I didn't stay home very long. I--
- Jim: Was your home in Oslo too?
- Henrik: Yes. So I went over to my cousin's house who lived down the street because he was not a student, and then my mom called there and she said—
- Jim: “They're looking for ya.”
- Henrik: “They're looking for ya.” One Nazi—well I guess they're probably both Nazis, one Norwegian policeman were there, and she said she didn't know where I was. So after that it became difficult I guess. You could get stopped anytime on the streets and if you were a student they might throw you in jail.
- Jim: So what did you do?
- Henrik: Well, I got ordered what to do from the resistance movement.
- Jim: How did they contact you Henrik?
- Henrik: Well, they knew that, you know, that I was— see after which I lived with one of my relatives so I could be safe because I can leave home but they had—the resistance movement had files from everybody too. (Laughs.) So we used to go and have maneuvers actually in the forest, because the Germans didn't go in the woods, you know and—
- Jim: But somebody had to teach you how to shoot a gun and do all these things?
- Henrik: Well, actually, I had learned that beforehand we had voluntary students -- military students—that was before German attacks. That was about '39—
- Jim: You had some summer things between school and semesters or--?

- Henrik: Actually it was in the winter. And we—right outside Oslo we carry a gun and we will shoot at—it wasn't actually you know, at targets and stuff.
- Jim: Sure. This was while you were in high school then?
- Henrik: Yah. Well yah, but—
- Jim: So you were ready to be a soldier then?
- Henrik: Well, not right away actually because the way I escaped out of Sweden was fairly dramatic because first I had to meet in the church. That was the place where the Germans didn't suspect anything going on. And brought along a picture. And they said, "Well you meet here again at one week and then you will get the full passport." This was printed in German and Norwegian both. And I had a fake name and everything. And so then they said "You will be leaving on a train towards the Swedish border. But you get off on such-and-such stop." And I said then, "What do I do?" "You just walk up the main street and there will be a car parked there." And there was a car. They took me to another place which was sort of a place where a lot of people want to escape. Some of them were Jewish because, of course, they knew they were being endangered by the Germans. So after we spent a couple of days there then we got ordered to move us in October for [unintelligible]. But then we walked across the border but we had to have about—oh I would say ten different people leading us. By that time there was snow on the ground and we walked across a lake there and then we came to the Swedish border. Walked across and—
- Jim: The Germans didn't stop you?
- Henrik: Well they—it's a very long border, they cannot—we saw the Germans at the distance, you know --
- Jim: Oh, you didn't cross at any official point? You just crossed ---
- Henrik: No, no. We just –
- Jim: In the woods.
- Henrik: In the woods, right. I'm pretty sure there was a Swedish border patrol, and he said "Well, I suppose you want to get something to eat." "Fine." He took us to a school, actually, in a small town there, Angas, and then we were not free to go where we wanted because, see, there was such a big number of people that fled from Norway. So what they did—they sent us to a station where we got interviewed, we got a physical examination, all that kind of stuff.

Jim: Another passport?

Henrik: No –

Jim: A Swedish passport?

Henrik: Well, let me see. I don't know how—Yah, we must have gotten some other papers there. And then they said to me, “What do you want to do?” I said, “Well I want to continue my medical studies in Sweden.” “Well,” they said, “It may be difficult.” Because we want you to go to this police camp, they call it. That was actually a fake name—what it was actually military training. What you would call boot camp here. So I got sent to one of these and—interesting. (laughs) I found out afterwards—one of the guys that were in this station was this Willy Brandt who became Chancellor of Germany, yeah, later on. Though I didn't talk to him. Anyway—so here I was in Sweden and I went even to Stockholm to the embassy there and I tried to finagle myself—well first I said, “Can I get over to England and fight?” They said, “No, we have very few planes.” They only took very important people, and I wasn't important enough. (both laugh) So they said with me, “You won't get to go.” So I stayed in this camp. It was okay, and then I was I don't know lucky or unlucky, yet in things like rifle—well they had us shooting on the range and doing a lot of things like soldiers do—marching, you know, up and down. And anyway I guess—so they say, “Well you can be—well you are a medical student?” I said yes. “But we have so many medical students,” they said, “We don't need you in the medical corps.” So then I got picked to be in the corps of engineering. I got sent to a place. And so—

Jim: In Sweden?

Henrik: Yah, this was a Norwegian camp where this --

Jim: In Sweden.

Henrik: In Sweden, Yah. They specialized in, well, things like you know; you have a corps of engineering.

Jim: Sure.

Henrik: That build bridges. We blow up things with dynamite, you know, TNT and stuff like that.

Jim: So they were training you to be a commando type or--?

Henrik: Well, yes.

- Jim: To go back into Norway after you're trained?
- Henrik: Not really alone, but I got sent to one of the – see there were several battalions of these Norwegians that got trained that way. And the battalion that I got sent to they got ordered to go up through northern Norway actually. Not right away because of course the war was still going on there. But I got picked to be in these ski troopers. And so that was a lot of details—dramatic stuff, I could go on in a bit, I don't know how much you want me to—
- Jim: Oh, I like the dram—the other stuff I can read in books, this kind—what you're talking about I can't. So that's why—let me have all of that.
- Henrik: Yah, okay. So I was probably a sergeant or something by that time and I know I was in charge of a bunch of guys. They sent us in these cattle cars. And it was right in the middle of winter. We went up to the northernmost point practically in Sweden and there they put us in some barracks, and it was cold there. It was like minus 40 Fahrenheit. You know how cold that is here in Wisconsin, see. And there we were waiting -- then we were practicing some more military games, and --
- Jim: On skis?
- Henrik: On skis, Yah. And so eventually they sent us—we got ordered to move and that's when we moved and then we only had tents to sleep in. We didn't have any barracks. But we had good equipment though. So they moved up along the border with Finland. Finland, of course was in war—
- Jim: With Russia.
- Henrik: Yes. So they let us go through a little piece of land in Finland and then we were supposed to go into Norway. What happened then was that the spring was coming early that year and so the snow started melting. And so it was—see we were supposed to build a road, which we did—we had some of these [Approx. 3 sec. pause in tape] Allis Chalmers tractors from Milwaukee actually. And we tried to build this road right through the wilderness. But as I said, it was warm and so some of these tractors—you know, they went through the ice and we lost a couple of people that way. But eventually—so then they had to make a decision and most of our forces pulled back into Sweden again because—I belonged to a smaller group that went into Norway. And everything was burned, you know, --
- Jim: You mean in the cities?
- Henrik: Yah, the Germans burned all the northern counties of Norway, see.

- Jim: The trees? Are you talking about the trees—the countryside? Or the cities?
- Henrik: The houses, everything was burned.
- Jim: Oh okay.
- Henrik: So when we came there, like I said, we had tents and we slept in these tents. And then we weren't quite sure what was going on militarily although we had, of course—what do you call it?—we knew that the Russians were moving in at that point. They came into Kirkebnes which is the northernmost city in Norway. Actually it used to be a border to Finland, but now it still is a border with Russia. And the Russians took that city. But then nobody knew what was going to happen, and I think the purpose and the German side already started to be drawing the troops in. So the idea was that they sent us in as a sort of buffer. We supposed to be there and occupy the space. So the Russians—they didn't say that because supposedly they were in cahoots with the Russians. And I found it a very interesting thing that I had a neighbor for many years—we were both on the west side of town who had been in the Air Force—you know, in the American Air Force. And he was one of the many guys that had been dropping supplies to us. Because you know we didn't have much food and what was more funny actually was that they don't alter these big Dakota planes so they don't—all kinds of provisions for us—including hay for the horses. (Laughs). I remember how mad the guys were because they -- couldn't eat the horse—they want to turn back, and, you know, at least give us something.
- Jim: Send us a horse rather than —keep the bale of hay.
- Henrik: So we were there and actually then the armistice came—when was that? In April or something of 19 –
- Jim: May.
- Henrik: It was in May.
- Jim: Of '45.
- Hendrick: 1945, Yah. Then we were up there still sleeping in these tents and the guys in my troop—well we sent out the ski patrols to find out where are the Germans were actually (??). So they knew we were there and we knew that they were withdrawing and that they were getting pretty sick and tired of this whole war business. But you know there was something



like 200,000 Germans up in northern Norway. So of course we were just a handful. We had no—they could have you know, done short --

Jim: Right. Got rid of you quick.

Henrik: Yah, if they wanted to, but I think they were ready to quit at that pointy. Essentially -- I was up there 'til—

Jim: You'd never gotten human actual combat with them?

Henrik: No, the closest thing I came to combat was that I got ordered from this captain to clear an airfield that the Germans had left behind. So I said to him, "Well, do you want me to look for mines then?" He said, "That won't be necessary because the Germans withdrew so fast that they wouldn't have time to put down any mines." So I won't go in all these details but what happened was that they had put down the mines and the way we found out was that this guy who had this tractor that I was supposed to tell what to do. He went up ahead of us; he starts the tractor and boom! He hit the first mine. So after that we took off about 250 mines from this one field. But we were lucky so we didn't have any casualties. But there was another group that was in another place more further east. They were not so lucky. I think personally that somebody made a tremendous boo-boo. Because what happened was that a guy whom I knew—he was also from Oslo—he was supposed to demonstrate the mine, see. And you know there are two types of mine. You have the anti-tank mines where you need 250 pounds to go up in the air and antipersonnel mine. And I think that what he did—he put the wrong mechanism in there. So anyway, the mine went off and about twenty-some people were killed immediately.

Jim: Oh, my.

Henrik: Many of them were wounded. And so at this point, we didn't know anything about this but I was on my way up to this airfield that we had cleared when a plane came right—it was a German-type plane, see. So I don't think I even gave an order before I start shooting at this plane. (Both laugh) And somebody must've hit the rudder of the plane, and it came down.

Jim: Oh, my. With a rifle they shot it down?

Henrik: Yah, because this was a slow plane. But he came right over our—(laughs) so one of the guys had a hit. Then funny enough, it turned out that this—the people in the plane were not Germans, these were Swedish (Jim laughs) people who were trying to have a rescue operation. These people

that got killed by a mine. So that was a really terrible mistake, but how could—we couldn't know that they were Swedes. Because the plane—

Jim: You couldn't tell.

Henrik: Yah, so they went – some of these, and there were all these people that—

Jim: Did it bring the plane down and it crashed and kill everybody?

Henrik: No, the plane was able to land on a lake and I guess the Swede was really swearing –

Jim: He was excited.

Henrik: A the top (laughs) of his lungs, Then he came out, yah, of the plane. So that went alright. Other people got killed in the mine—other people, you know, the Germans had mines everywhere. And I got told that I was supposed to help with clearing all these minefields, but I said “Look, I want to get back to medical school.” So first they called me a traitor and all that, but I said—

Jim: Oh really?

Henrik: Yah.

Jim: Gee!

Henrik: But I was able to—actually; I had a lot of German in school, so I could speak German. So I was in Narvik, that's a city further down. I got the job of clearing up a big military camp there. And I was supposed to use a German soldier for this purpose, you know, and --

Jim: This is after the Germans had quit from there?

Henrik: Yah, they had quit then.

Jim: And these are prisoners then?

Henrik: They were prisoners. So I said to this guy, I gave him one rank more than I knew he had, you know I said, “Sind Sie der Oberfeldwebel?” Right, I knew it was “Feldwebel”—you know that's like a corporal or sergeant or something. SO he just immediately salutes and then I said, “I want you to take charge of all your boys,” I said, “Because they will listen to you, they might not listen to me.” “Oh no problem!” They cleared up the camp and so I was lucky with that one. And so basically, that's what happened. And eventually I did get out of the military and I came home. Home back

to Oslo. Then at that time all the fun was over. These guys had just come marching back from Sweden. They were the big liberators, you know --

Jim: They didn't really do anything.

Henrik: No.

Jim: Not in Sweden.

Henrik: No. (Laughs) By the time I got down there—but I was just lucky to get out of medical school—

Jim: A lot of your friends had stayed in Norway, they were in the underground, and in the underground they did a lot of wonderful things.

Henrik: Oh, yes. Right. They tried to do everything—

Jim: And your family was involved with that?

Henrik: No, my—you know, I was very hesitant about about telling my dad what I was up to because I knew that sometimes they would take—and my dad actually died during the war, and I didn't find out about that until after his funeral. Anyway—

Jim: But how tough was the occupation? Tell me about that.

Henrik: The occupation was in the beginning, you know, it was not too bad because the Germans—

Jim: They let the Norwegians run their own little government?

Henrik: Well –

Jim: And the cities?

Henrik: Oh, they –

Jim: Up to a point, of course.

Henrik: Yah, but they wanted everybody to collaborate see, and of course many people didn't want to do that. So they picked this one guy, Quisling—

Jim: Right. I know his cousins.

Henrik: Yah (laughs).

Jim: I know his cousins.

Henrik: You know his cousins? Yah. And so they made the bad mistake that they asked about him and they said that he was a good man. But he was – but of course what happened is that he had been visiting with Hitler and this came all out and of course he was court martialed, and he got --

Jim: He got shot.

Henrik: He got shot, yah, you're right.

Jim: How about his family that was there? They too?

Henrik: He only had one wife. She was Russian.

Jim: Oh, I see.

Henrik: Maria Quisling, yah. He had married her when he was a military attaché to Russia.

Jim: You didn't know him?

Henrik: No, I never saw Quisling. I --

Jim: But you were a young guy then.

Henrik: Yah. But I remember that when the Germans marched into Oslo there, then they surrounded the parliament building with all these soldiers. And we're standing—I remember asking the guy in German, "What are you doing? Why do you come here?" He says, "We are here to liberate you." I said, "From what?" Yah, well they claimed the English were ready to attack us which there was certain amount of truth to that. But then the radio came on and they announced that Vidkun Quisling had now been named president of Norway—or in charge of everything. And I can remember one guy swearing at the top of his lungs. But most people thought, "Well, so what?" I mean, he was already sort of disgraced because he had been in a very conservative party and he had been up to some tricks and people said, "Well we don't—" He had tried to run his own political party before that. But nobody wanted—even though he had all kinds of gimmicks like—well he didn't mean it to be gimmicks, he was serious. He said that Norway was once a big country, and it will be great country again. But see, that was the Nazi ideology. And most people said that this is—

Jim: They didn't believe that.

- Henrik: This is not true, you know. Norway is a small country. All they want is peace. They don't want—
- Jim: They don't want to be liberated, right.
- Henrik: Right. (Both laugh.) So he got what he deserved I think.
- Jim: Oh, but after [unintelligible] they started some bombing and then the occupation became tough then, right?
- Henrik: Yes. Well, they—
- Jim: What did they sabotage in Oslo that you were familiar with?
- Henrik: Well, actually, there wasn't too much sabotaged right in Oslo I think. It was more on the coast, I would say. Well of course you know about that heavy waters in Telemark—
- Jim: Yah, they sabotaged that.
- Henrik: Yes they sabotaged that one, yah. But, see, nobody quite understand why the Germans wanted to occupy Norway, really. The excuse they had was that they needed the iron ore. And that was mined in Sweden.
- Jim: I was gonna say, that's in Sweden, that's not Norway.
- Henrik: But then it's shipped over to Norway and -- railroad and then transported on these big ships along the Norwegian coast. And the English knew about that. So they had to interfere with the transport. And so that's why the Germans said a certain amount of truth that they were—
- Jim: The English looked for that as a way of stopping those iron ore shipments if they could get into Norway first.
- Henrik: Yes, right. So I guess that's about it in a nutshell. I had—I gave a talk here once to a group of Norwegian—I belong to a society here that mainly university people and so I have a manuscript from that which I can give you, but I don't know how much of you're interested in.
- Jim: Well I'd like to sure. When we're done here I'll look at some (unintelligible).
- Henrik: Yah. When we are—
- Jim: Whenever.

- Henrik: Yah, okay.
- Jim: I'd like read it.
- Henrik: Yah. Well, there was a guy that wrote a thing I have in here too, but this was written in Norwegian. See about this maneuvering as I told you about how we were moving with the ski troopers up to northern Norway. And that was **[End of Tape One, Side A, ca. 30 min.]** all on the way home, you know, so this describes the hardship—the difficulties, I would say, that we had. But actually, you say hardship but to me, it wasn't really, I didn't really feel it like that because like I said we were not in some terrible hand to hand fight with—
- Jim: You had plenty of food?
- Henrik: Well the food we had was not the best, but it was food. You know how rations are; the GI rations the same sort of thing. And I remember I was getting pretty sick and tired of eating—
- Jim: Same food.
- Henrik: Same food all the time. So I had some Laplanders—Norway has minorities like Indians—
- Jim: You had some reindeer steaks.
- Henrik: Yes. So they said, “Well, let's just chip together and get some reindeer.”
- Jim: Buy a reindeer (unintelligible)
- Henrik: We did that.
- Jim: You butchered a reindeer?
- Henrik: This fellow—he was only about twenty years of age—he knew what to do. We came—I went with him and helped get paid for the deer, for the reindeer. Then we took a lasso and he led it, you know, and another guy and I myself came behind him. The deer didn't know what was going to happen. So everybody came that wanted to see the reindeer. It was just about the size of a—not any bigger than a white-tailed deer in Wisconsin. [Unintelligible]. The deer stood there and all of a sudden the guy slipped a knife right in here, you can imagine into the medulla oblongata. And that deer just dropped (claps) like that.
- Jim: Just like a bull fighter.

- Henrdrik: He stabbed it in the chest. And he dressed up the deer right there in the snow. He took out everything. And here's a guy, like 20 years old—
- Jim: He's a butcher.
- Henrik: Yah, well, because see this is what they had been doing generation after generation to stay alive.
- Jim: The Laplanders, Yah.
- Henrik: The Lap --, that's their food, yah.
- Jim: That must've been fascinating to see how quick he could do that.
- Henrik: (Laughs) He could do that, yah. The best job I ever seen was this young fellow. And he said that to us, he and the other guys—they always talked their own language, we don't understand what they're saying. But then they were saying in Norwegian that, "I can do everything better than you can." (Laughs.) And this is true, up there; they were superior in that respect, and --
- Jim: They live out in the country all the time.
- Henrik: Yes, yes. And they're—
- Jim: Primitive people, really.
- Henrik: Yah. Still about 30,000 of them live that way you know, but they're getting more and more modern—now there's snowmobiles, you know, just like people enjoy in Wisconsin. (laughs)
- Jim: So how was the reindeer meat?
- Henrik: Very good. I had a big iron—the only thing the Germans hadn't been able to burn up was this big iron kettle. And that's the one we used to cook up a big stew in—that reindeer meat—delicious. So everybody was happy for awhile.
- Jim: How big was your own outfit there? What are you talking about—thirty, forty guys? Or more?
- Henrik: Yah, see I was in charge of what they call the Pioneers. That's only twenty –
- Jim: Twenty guys.

- Henrik: But then we were part of a company that was like 150 or something. And then we were part of a battalion which was—a battalion, you get up to 500 people or something. So we were a pretty small group. The other battalion was the ones that had this mining accident I told you about. That was also about the same size. But they had come from a different angle. They were flown into Kirkenes where the Russians were. And then they came on the ski troopers—
- Jim: Across Finland.
- Henrik: Yah, well no, they came through northern Norway. But we never met up with those guys. Anyway, it was sort of a—
- Jim: Were you being paid during this time?
- Henrik: Well we got minimal pay I would say.
- Jim: Nothing of any --
- Henrik: Well, we were supposed to get—we had, or course, uniforms and they had clothing and sleeping bags and these were actually stuff we got from the Swedes. And that of course they give the weapon and ammunition and all that—but no, there wasn't much—
- Jim: The weapons and ammunition were Swedish?
- Henrik: Yes.
- Jim: Did you get along with them?
- Henrik: We got along with Swedes? Yah, we had some Swedish officers training us. They were very good, actually. They were very -- and we were all eager to learn this war business so we could handle our -- you know, whatever.
- Jim: You know, at the end of the war, Sweden was look upon as a semi-collaborator with Germany because they kept supplying them with heavy metal and all the metals, you know. And iron ore— and everything else (?).
- Henrik: Yah, well, this --
- Jim: What's your feeling about that?
- Henrik: Well, there are two things I can tell you about that. Once I was naïve, I went to Stockholm. And I went up to the Norwegian embassy which I sat



down to study. But they said, “You’re not supposed to stay here in Stockholm because there are so many spies and foreigners.” So I said, “Well, I’ll just go up to the police station.” So I was very naïve. (Laughs). I went up there, and they threw me in jail. (Jim laughs). So I had to sleep in—

Jim: You were a spy.

Henrik: Jail. Yeah, so, well, I got out the next day and I went up to embassy, and they just laughed at me. I must be dumb to do that. But, no the guys that we were in all these camps all around Sweden, they were sure that the Germans were supplying—that the Swede tried to appease the German. And one of the things that a bunch of these guys did—they blew up a train in the middle of Sweden that was full of ammunition that the Germans—see, the Swedes let the Germans send ammunition and weapons and everything so they could fight the Norwegians. So yes, they would— I should say on both --

Jim: They tried to be neutral.

Henrik: Exactly. They were sitting on the fence then, see, in the beginning. Because they were not sure that—

Jim: Who was gonna win?

Henrik: Yah, they thought maybe that Adolf could still pull it off but of course he didn’t. So slowly they became more and more sympathetic to our cause. And it was different. See, if you take Goteborg or Gothenburg which is closer to Norway, they were very friendly. They all defended the region, but Stockholm, they were much less friendly. And I can remember and cite one example. Four of us—we were all medical students, I said we went to Uppsala and we went to have a good time there. We went to a dance and I saw a pretty Swedish girl and I went up and asked her for a dance, she said, “No thank you, I don’t dance with Norwegians,” she says to me.

Jim: Now, this was after the war?

Henrik: No, this was actually during the war, yah. You know we’re next to Sweden, yah. They said, “I don’t dance with Norwegians,” she said. And so there was a certain amount of—

Jim: Hostility, there.

Henrik: Hostility. Yah, they thought the Norwegians were troublemakers. And actually, to some extent, they were right because I remember when we

had—when we were up in these camps, then we were out in the country, out in “the boonies” as they say. So of course we were ready to have some fun on the weekend. So we somehow get ahold of booze—which you couldn’t even buy that in Sweden but we found a bunch of ways to either make it or buy it—

Jim: What, there was no liquor available?

Henrik: Well you had to—it’s funny, in Sweden, you had to have a book,--

Jim: Ah. State Store.

Henrik: Paying taxes, then you could buy liquor. We couldn’t—best thing we could do was to go to a barber and he would usually sell it to us (both laugh) under the, you know --

Jim: Was that regular whiskey or was it stuff that was made up in the loft? (Laughs).

Henrik: Some of it—we made some of it ourselves.

Jim: Like moonshine.

Henrik: Yah. We made some awful stuff that --

Jim: That’ll kill ya.

Henrik: Like, you know, you take either coke or something, raisins and yeast, and all that—

Jim: Wait awhile—

Henrik: Yah, and you can make your own. So then, like I said, here came Saturday, and we were all set to have fun (??). We invaded this little Swedish city—a bunch of half-drunk Norwegians going to this dance. And of course the Swedish boys didn’t like that. Some of them wanted to fist-fight. Oh they’d say, “Why do you come in here, giving us trouble?”

Jim: So they’d chase you out?

Henrik: No, we were usually enough of us that we were able to stand our ground. But the Swedish girls were very nice and my—when I came to visit (unintelligible) after the war and, my mother got very frantic. She said, “You are not going to marry a Swedish girl!” (Laughs) Which I didn’t do, so I came over here and married an American girl instead.

Jim: (Laughs) That was okay?

Henrik: That was okay. Well, I don't – she thought I should have married a Norwegian girl. [Unintelligible]. You know, we don't do things that way like they do in --

Jim: Well, Sweden shouldn't feel that way, they were not occupied, you know?

Henrik: Yah.

Jim: I don't see why they should feel towards the Norwegians the way they did.

Henrik: Yah, well I don't know either, but not everybody—they were sort of—

Jim: Did you see Germans all over Sweden—Stockholm while you were there? Soldiers I mean?

Henrik: No.

Jim: Not particularly?

Henrik: No, there were not Germans in uniform in Sweden.

Jim: They were all probably plainclothes.

Henrik: Yah, what I remember—one place had fallen that's in the middle of Sweden up in -Dalerna (??). We came in there in the hotel. And there were all these American pilots sitting around there having shot down over Sweden.

Jim: Oh, my.

Henrik: And of course, they had lots of money. So, eventually, this Swedish girl went for those guys.

Jim: Well that's why—why mess with you when you can —

Henrik: Yah, exactly. (Both laugh.) Yah, what the --

Jim: Don't get out of my section here (??).

Henrik: Yah.

Jim: Anyhow –

- Henrik: So, you know, it was funny that this guy Sid, I heard his name was Sid—one of my neighbors—he had belonged to this American outfit that dropped those supplies.
- Jim: Oh yeah, the hay.
- Henrik: Yah, we just had just read about that in the newspapers so my wife says, “Hey, he must have been one of the guys that—so we should visit these people that live just a couple streets down from us.” And he was telling us how difficult it was to get these planes started in this minus-forty degrees weather. They had to use blowtorches to get the oil you know --
- Jim: Circulating.
- Henrik: Yah, circulating. And—
- Jim: Does he live in Madison?
- Henrik: Yah, this guy, Sidney—I could tell you his name—
- Jim: I’ll get it after you’re through here. Yah, I’d like to interview him.
- Henrik: Yah. If he’s still alive. He wasn’t in too good shape when I saw him. But maybe he’s still alive.
- Jim: Well, I can find out I suppose. So after you—how long were you in this Swedish-Norwegian outfit here? How long were you there?
- Henrik: Altogether, it was about a year and a half. And it got—when Eisenhower was president, he passed and they passed a law—that Selective Service Act which said that people who had been in an allied army would be given credit for that. So I was really lucky there. Because first they want to draft me, and I said, “Well, then I want to go back to Norway, I don’t want to serve anymore.” So then that passed and I was able to—
- Jim: So you got two years credit?
- Henrik: Something like that.
- Jim: So what was it like going back to Norway after the war?
- Henrik: Well, it was okay. I mean things --
- Jim: You said a lot of things were burned down.

- Henrik: Yah, but that was mainly up in northern Norway, not so much in Oslo. What was trouble for me was I was not married so I stayed home in my—I said my father had died so I stayed in my mom and my sister's. And of course, here I had been in charge of all of these guys and bossing them around, and now my mother wanted to tell me what to do. (Laughs). I had to behave myself. Which was probably good then. I studied hard and wanted to get through medical school, which I eventually did, and then I—
- Jim: You finished medical school? You started right away, or shortly after the war?
- Henrik: Yah, I started right away. I wasn't able to finish until '49. Christmas '49. I was home 50 years after graduation of medical school. Out of my class of 89 only 41 are left. So, I don't know.
- Jim: Was the school in good shape? Did the Germans take any equipment out or anything like that?
- Henrik: No, the school was okay. Of course, by that time, I was—no, I guess I hadn't (??) finished my basic science. But then the hospitals of course were safer and everyone was happy that the war was over.
- Jim: Did you know anyone any of these men who had decided to go to Germany and become part of the German Army?
- Henrik: Oh yah. Well, many of—these are my classmates, you know. Some of them did not want to go to Germany—they were sent to Germany.
- Jim: Oh, I thought they gave them an option that you could --
- Henrik: Yah, well they said you can go to the—and fight—so instead, since they didn't want to go and fight, they put them in this organization where they were supposed to do work, you know. That was Tuldt. I guess it's called a T-U-L-D-T (??). You know, working troops they called it. They got sent there on—some went to help the German farmers. And some of them actually had a fairly good time. Of course, the food there was not the greatest either. They had a certain amount of TB which was interesting in these camps—they were also staying in camps, you know.
- Jim: When they came back to Norway, were they treated fairly?
- Henrik: They were treated – yah.
- Jim: They weren't treated with hostility—or they weren't treated as traitors, I guess?

- Henrik: Oh, no, they were actually good Norwegians. They didn't want to be sent to Germany that was—they were forced there, yah.
- Jim: They had no choice, really? They had to go.
- Henrik: No, they had no choice.
- Jim: Did any of them have to go in the army?
- Henrik: After they came back to Norway?
- Jim: No, I mean when they went down to Germany, did they put them in the army?
- Henrik: No, these were non-fighting outfits. Because they didn't want to enlist. The Germans, I guess, knew better than to try to force them because—even though they needed -- Well there were a few—they called them Quislings—that's what they called them in the army (??).
- Jim: Did you know any of those people?
- Henrik: Yes, I knew a couple of guys that—I didn't know that they were —
- Jim: Traitors.
- Henrik: Traitors, yeah, but –
- Jim: They were in government offices—Quisling's government offices, or some post like that?
- Henrik: Yah, they were—well, of course, Quisling had a whole entourage of people that worked for him and some of these people – [Approx. 16 sec. pause in tape]
- Jim: His entourage and who didn't kill themselves are some left and some put in jail?
- Henrik: Some of them were put in jail—they were prosecuted according to Norwegian --
- Jim: You knew a few of those people, you say?
- Henrik: Yah, I knew a few people but I can't—one of them was in medical school with me and he was able to get back into medical school again. I don't know how but he was probably not the worst criminal, however. Collaborator—

Jim: Well he obviously wasn't prosecuted then, if they let him back in school.

Henrik: Yah, right. That's right. You know, there was a lot of problems with people that were the prominent people like -- (unintelligible) think of this singer, this Kirsten Flagstad, this Metropolitan star. But she had married the guy who was a Nazi. Well, that didn't make her a Nazi, but people didn't want to go and listen to her sing anymore and stuff like that. And Hamsun was a distinguished author—the Nobel Prize. He got accused of being a Nazi.

Jim: A collaborator.

Henrik: But I don't think he really did anything. The problem was that the Germans had also—you know, before the war you might say being held for recognizing a Norwegian talents just like Hamsun and this painter, Edvard Munch for instance. He was also—well, he was not that popular in Germany but anyway, they made him popular. Some people, which were arrested and after the war sat and served in the jail sentence for a certain—

Jim: Oh, they refused to do anything for the Germans, and they were put in jail? Is that --

Henrik: Oh, why the Germans would actually do worse things than that. I can remember one of my friends from high school—he was put in jail and then when the English commanders like we were talking about attacked, then the Germans would then take repercussions. This one guy got shot, you know. Pretty sad, he was an only son. The mother had to read in the newspaper that her son was shot. So there were instances like this, but they were not—many of them of course were not able to—I have a cousin in Norway that's just my age. He ran off to England. He was able to leave Norway on one of the fishing boats to the Shetland Island, then to Scotland, then he came over to Canada, trained to be a pilot. That was more—I talked to him, he even wrote a book about his experiences. And I said, well I know what I did is skiing up in the north, that was not so glamorous.

Jim: Well, everybody does their thing. Whatever they're assigned.

Henrik: Well, that's the thing. And we were together— three cousins in Norway at his place and he was selected (??) in the air force, I was in the ski troopers, and our third cousin grew up in the United States, he fought with Patton, you know. So we all had the different experiences during the war

—

- Jim: Right. Quite different.
- Henrik: That we all can compare.
- Jim: Are they still alive?
- Henrik: Yah, they're still alive, both of them are still alive.
- Jim: The fellow that lives in Canada, is he still in Canada?
- Henrik: No, he doesn't live in Canada. He went back to Norway. He is a lawyer in Oslo. Yah it was funny, in his book he has a picture of this girl he had met up in Canada. She wanted to marry him and I think she pursued him back to Norway—
- Jim: But he wouldn't take her.
- Henrik: --but he decided he would stick to Norwegian girls. Yah, it's kind of interesting. But you know, so many people have done so many great things here, I know American guys – for instance, up in -- see I'm very Norwegian so I go up in Iola, up in Waupaca County there, and I have one friend, Jim Stoltenberg. He was also a pilot, but he didn't write a book about it. And another guy, Johnson, up there, he was also a pilot. I mean, everybody trained in these camps and, you know, fought in the Air Force. And it's funny, Jim Stoltenberg, this particular guy, I said to him, "Jim, you never talk about it." "Well, the war, that's all over with now. And I don't want to talk about those things anymore." And that's very admirable I think that the guy has this kind of—
- Jim: Some men —I've talked a lot of them out of that. I told 'em it's therapeutic to talk about it.
- Henrik: To talk about it, yah.
- Jim: Sure.
- Henrik: Oh yah I think that everybody—but isn't it true sometimes that the guy that talks the most maybe did not --
- Jim: --Done the least? (laughs)
- Henrik: Yah. We always used to say that the guys who get the medals are not the ones that always deserves them and there are other people who did them. I mean when I revisit places with my wife (??) places like Normandy— and saw all these guys would climb up these—



- Jim: Incredible.
- Henrik: That's incredible, right. So you know, we all—I feel a deep sense of debt to all these people that really—
- Jim: Oh, of course, you have to.
- Henrik: Had this –horrendous --
- Jim: I've done so little, and they've done so much, yeah. It's a feeling you have to have, yah.
- Henrik: Yah, they gave their lives and so many others you know, and people continue to do that—so in that sense, I feel sympathy for certain liberal viewpoints. I think that the trouble now is that the youth has not had this discipline that you get from serving in the army, so they don't realize how fortunate they are to live in a country with so much to offer.
- Jim: I don't know how you make people believe that, but I guess you have to suffer to believe it.
- Henrik: Well, it almost seems that way.
- Jim: So, how did you get to the United States? You finished your medical school, then what?
- Henrik: You know, I was almost through with medical school and I happened to be picked to go to Denmark. We had these Swedish-Danish-Norwegian—So, I got treated very nicely in Denmark and I came back and a guy wrote me a letter. It says, "Say, would you mind helping out some American medical students? They would like to see Norway because their ancestors were Norwegian." So there was a guy by the name of Rolf Noer, N-O-E-R. And he came to Oslo and he stayed with my family, and he was the one who started to tell me how great it would be for me if I took a year, you know, after I graduated in Norway, to come over here and start—you know, do a specialty or something. So that's how I came to Madison. And actually, I did know a little bit about Madison because when I was sixteen years old—this was before the war, 1936—I come here with a Boy Scout troop. And we came—well, we spent more time up in the Twin Cities but we did come through Madison I remember it well. And one of my old friends who has long since passed away, Professor Olaf Haugen, he said to me, "Henrik, you're the only guy I know who used to sleep in a tent down on the lower campus." And we pitched our tent there in front of Memorial Union, where the library is now and he said—well, I did know Madison was a nice place, so I thought, why not come here? But I had no real intention of staying.

- Jim: But didn't you have to make some connection with the University before you came?
- Henrik: Well, he had taken my letter and given it to Dr. Mossman in anatomy. And I said in this letter, I was interested in pathology, see. So he handed my letter over to Angevine who was a pathology person. So he promised me a glorious sum of 125 dollars a month.
- Jim: For a residency in pathology?
- Henrik: Yah. As a scholarship. And then I saw all the other guys were doing a residency. I said, "Well, this scholarship isn't taking me anywhere" because I was doing research, which was interesting, but it was—so I started to do my residency. So before I knew it, I was doing my residency. And one day, they asked me, "How did you happen to get married then?" "Well," I said, the residency were going to have a dance up at Blackhawk or something. And so I was talking to this telephone operator. We used to call her "Ma," I think her name was Schneider or something. She says to me, "You're going to the dance, aren't you?" I said, "No way." She said, "Oh, a young guy like you should go to the dance." And I said, "Well I don't know anybody." Well she said, "You must know somebody." Well I said I saw a nice young girl out there in the elevator. (Laughs). Believe it or not, she called her up and I came out there—she was operating the elevator, you know, right there in the middle of the hospital.
- Jim: At University Hospital?
- Henrik: Yah, so she was a student, but she worked as a student.
- Jim: A student nurse or just a regular student, undergraduate?
- Henrik: No, she was a student at the information desk, actually. So I said I went into the elevator and I asked for a ride and I got one. So we got married—
- Jim: Right. The next thing you know it by the time the elevator came down you were married.
- Henrik: Yah, practically, (Laughs), not quite that fast. So I sent my mother a telegram saying that I lost my independence on the 4th of July.
- Jim: My control has been turned over from you to another lady.
- Henrik: (Laughs) Yah, right, something like that. So we have been married and have these five kids.

- Jim: Five kids?
- Henrik: Yah.
- Jim: Did they pursue a medical career?
- Henrik: No, not directly. One daughter is an excellent physical occupational therapist. And other than that, no. They are teachers; they are lawyers.
- Jim: Do they live around here?
- Henrik: They all live elsewhere. I don't know why, but --
- Jim: Around the United States?
- Henrik: They live in the United States; they all live in the United States. Nobody—my son, our oldest son went back to Norway, and I said to him, “You don't know what to study anyway; you might as well go back to Norway and do some skiing there.” (Laughs). So he wrote me this letter saying, “Guess what, I'm a Norske, you know.” I said wait till he finds out what that means. So sure enough they call me and tell me—**[End of Tape One, Side B. Ca. 30 min.]**  
 -- [unintelligible]. (Both Laugh). So he says, I can—they said, “Well, you are in excellent physical shape, you can either be a paratrooper or you can be in the King's Guard.” He has his own guard, you know. And he said, “I think I'll go back to Wisconsin.” So he came back here and of course here essentially (??) that you don't have to serve, I mean if he had to come up with a reason he had to serve, he [unintelligible] military duty. But of course we don't have compulsory. So here I married the daughter of a general. My wife's father was a general.
- Jim: Oh, really?
- Henrik: And none of our two sons served in the armed forces—
- Jim: They were just at the wrong time so they missed Vietnam?
- Henrik: Yah. Right. One of them was over in Germany and the German who had been prisoner of war in the United States took him to register at the Selective Service because you had to do that anyway. And took him up to Hamburg or something. But so neither of them served. And so it was pretty funny, I got actually engaged down in at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base where he was stationed, you know, her dad, at that time. Of course I came down there and everyone started saluting me because I was marrying the daughter of a general, (Laughs) and – but --

Jim: But you weren't in uniform?

Henrik: No, I was not in uniform.

Jim: That's the elevator operator?

Henrik: That was the elevator operator.

Jim: And she was the daughter of a general?

Henrik: The daughter of a general, Yah. And I said to somebody, I got married into a very well-known family. Because her name was Ann Smith that was her maiden name (Laughs).

Jim: Big family.

Henrik: Big family, Yah. So Ann Smith and I were madly in love now for quite a few years, I mean --

Jim: Do you keep in contact with any of the fellows that were in your company or battalion or—

Henrik: I don't think I keep—no. I keep in touch with some of my friends from medical school, you know, that's the main thing. And I did go back and spent a year in pathology, which was my special group in Oslo. But it didn't seem that things were the same anymore except for these friends. We were constantly invited around to different places in Norway where these people lived, you know. And then some of them will come to the United States and visit me here, and some of my relatives will come to the United States and visit. So of course they said to me, "Don't you want to be a member of the Madison-Oslo sister"—was it sister city or something? I said no, I don't want to be—

Jim: Oh, yeah.

Henrik: This organization.

Jim: Did that.

Henrik: I'm the only guy I says, who probably did half my life in Oslo and the other half in Madison.

Jim: Right.

Henrik: But I don't want to be in [unintelligible] those things.

- Jim: Well you go to toaster clubbin’.
- Henrik: I don’t go there either.
- Jim: Oh you don’t?
- Henrik: No, because—
- Jim: I have lunch with Gene Nordby about—oh, about once a month.
- Henrik: Oh you do? Yah, no Gene is very big there.
- Jim: (Laughs) He’s the boss.
- Henrik: Yah, he’s the boss, Yah.
- Jim: I’m sure you’ve been to several of them.
- Henrik: I told you I was in this country when I was a Boy Scout. I was in the Torske Klubben in Minneapolis. Which is the original one, in 1936? And I said to myself, “Fooley! If this is what they call fresh cod? This is not fresh cod!”
- Jim: Well, you know, they fly it in.
- Henrik: Well they can fly it in all they want. It’s not fresh. When I was a kid I would go down with my mother to see the torsk swimming around, and she said “I would like that one please.” And the fisherman would take it up and knock it in the head. And *that* is a fresh cod. And even before that, my grandfather, I guess he was in the business of it—he died in Spain, he was trying to sell a codfish to the Spanish. So a lot of my relatives there made a lot of money in the codfish business. But no, I do like cod, but it has to be fresh. And the worse thing was when they invited us to eat lutefisk. And people did not use—well, they didn’t know how to do it. But many of these Norwegian farmers from there (?), they like lutefisk and of course the churches love it because they can make a lot of money.
- Jim: Lutefisk suppers, right.
- Henrik: But it has to be right in order to be good. It’s just like anything else when it comes to food.
- Jim: Exactly.
- Henrik: So I, no, I never joined the Torske Klubben.

Jim: That's pretty strong.

Henrik: That's pretty powerful stuff. Yah, I didn't drink too much of that. But they say now it cuts the grease (Jim Laughs) you know if you have had the experience, for instance, then it's the right thing to do. It's funny that all these experiences like I was a ski trooper, that's still very much a part of my life is skiing. Like tomorrow, we are going out to.

Jim: Eight inches of snow in Denver today.

Henrik: Oh good news!

Jim: That was just on the TV this morning.

Henrik: Oh, wonderful.

Jim: Big snowstorm in Denver tomorrow. My daughter lives there, one of them.

Henrik: Oh yah, how many kids have you got?

Jim: Four. Well I got three. I lost one.

Henrik: Oh. Too bad.

Jim: Yah.

Henrik: And none of your kids got into medicine either?

Jim: One was a medical tech—

Henrik: Is that right?

Jim: And one is—she runs a pediatric intensive care in a children's hospital in Oakland, California.

Henrik: Oh wonderful, yah.

Jim: She's been there for thirty years.

Henrik: So you were born and raised in Madison, aren't ya?

Jim: Well, Edgerton, I was born but I've lived in Madison all my life.

Henrik: Edgerton?

Jim: It's just south of Madison.

Henrik: Is that where Germans live? You know, I have a funny story about that first year I was in Madison. I befriended one guy who was a caretaker, managed something, from Stoughton. And he says to me, "You want to see Stoughton?" I said, "What's that?" He said, "A city." So here we are driving this old car to Stoughton and he says to me, "I want you to come up and meet Doug Olson because I have to get some medicine for my mother, she's in a nursing home." So here's this Doug Olson sitting in the shade, he was on the main street in Stoughton. And he looks at me and he says, "Hmmm, are you related to Doctor Slyra Hartmann?" I looked at him, I said, "That was my dad's brother, but I never knew him. He died before I was born."

Jim: (Laughs) I'll be darned.

Henrik: So I said, "How did you know him?" Well, he says, "We were together at the medical meeting in Chicago in 1916. (laughs)

Jim: (Laughs) Wow. That's a memory.

Henrik: The guy had a memory, yah. First of all, I --

Jim: My wife is from Stoughton.

Henrik: Oh really? So you mean you got mixed up— with Norwegians.

Jim: With Norwegians very early. (Both laugh)

Henrik: What was her maiden name?

Jim: Swingen.

Henrik: Swingen! Oh, was she the daughter of Eldred Swingen?

Jim: That's her uncle.

Henrik: That's her uncle, yeah. I know he's a member of Eagles (??) .

Jim: Oh, sure.

Henrik: I sometimes meet head-to-head with Gene Nordby. I have to tell you this though because he's very, very conservative, Gene. And he doesn't want to have any women into this organization. He says then you might as well forget it. But I think there are more people now who want women in there

because certainly women can make a good contribution. So Swingen—he lived in Stoughton too. For years there I thought I had to run to Stoughton because I was Norwegian. So we'd start up here on the square, you know, run around here, causeway and down to Stoughton. But my wife's sister said that I looked like I was dead when I was—

Jim: --running the Syttende Mai.

Henrik: Yah, (laughs) so I quit doing that. But I still ski though because that's my-

Jim: Well I jogged for about 33 years and then about three years ago I decided my knees were bothering me so I've been just walking. Now I walk every day. About four miles a day.

Henrik: That's the best for ya, right?

Jim: It's good for a seventy - seven year old, that's what you should be doing.

Henrik: You are seventy-seven? I figured you are younger than me, only three years. Yah, I bike—I tell ya. I rode a bike today, down here but you know, yesterday I heard about a guy who works in the medical school, David Gilmore (??) he got smashed by some Korean guy or something.

Jim: Didn't see him?

Henrik: Didn't see him or maybe he ran a red light or something. I don't know. But he's in the hospital—broken arms, broken legs, everything. So you know, it's dangerous even to ride a bike. You have to be careful.

Jim: Yah, it sure is.

Henrik: But try to stay in shape. But you seem to be in pretty good shape.

Jim: Overweight, that's all.

Henrik: Yah, this pushing away from the table—

Jim: It's damned difficult, very difficult.

Henrik: It's very difficult, yah.

Jim: I'm hungry all the time, you know. Everything—when you get older, nothing works except one thing—your appetite. That's just as good as when I was eighteen. That's not fair. (Both laugh.)



Henrik: That's not fair, right, and right. No I had a problem too, now I get—but my wife, she has a little problem, she fractured one of her legs so she's doing this water aerobics out at one of these Harbor Athletic Club.

Jim: Harbor View?

Henrik: Yah.

Henrik: So she got me to join there too, and you know this is kind of nice because I go there early in the morning, and you meet the same kind of guys and you tell jokes, do some of these exercises and it gives a good attitude when you wake up in the morning. But I agree that running is too hard on your knees. And so that's why bike riding is better, but sometimes my wife and I ride on this bike trail. That's pretty good. But we have an exciting time ahead of us now because— I --

Jim: Where are you gonna ski in Denver?

Henrik: Well our daughter teaches a school there in Denver.

Jim: In the city?

Henrik: In the city, Yah.

Jim: But you ski up where?

Henrik: We ski probably up at the YMCA of the Rockies, maybe Winter Park.

Jim: Which park?

Henrik: Well Winter Park is a downhill ski area --

Jim: Oh, Winter Park.

Henrik: But the YMCA on the Rockies is a cross-country ski area. I don't know if it'll be there or—

Jim: Oh, you're skiing cross-country?

Henrik: Yah, no I'm not a downhill skier—

Jim: Just cross country.

Henrik: Yah, when we were in Aspen—my sister used to live there—the kid says, “Daddy doesn't know how to downhill ski.” And they were quite young and so I said, “I wouldn't bet on that.” I said, “But oh, you want to bet on us,” so we went up there, I think it's Buttermilk or something, it's really

steep, and so I borrowed my brother's little skis and I said, "I'll beat you down to the chalet." And I did, so I don't have to prove anything anymore. No I prefer cross-country.

Jim: It's safer.

Henrik: Yah, and it gives you a better exercise.

Jim: Oh yah. Downhill skiing is not much exercise. Unless you climb back up.

Henrik: Right. I've been the oldest participant in the Birkie two years in a row. This year, of course, they had to cancel.

Jim: You're the only eighty year old?

Henrik: Well, I'll be eighty next week. So next year, I'll have it easy if I can ski because I won't have anybody in my class. See I'm in the 75-79 this year.

Jim: Right. You'll have it all to yourself next year.

Henrik: For two years I've got what they call a patriarch award just for completing and being the oldest participant. And there was a Swede from way up in there where I was telling about Lumeo (??) I guess he was from, and but he quit doing the long one, he just did the short one. I figured, well if I'm out there to ski I might as well do the whole thing. You know, as long as my body doesn't object too much.

Jim: You got through the twenty-six miles?

Henrik: Yah, thirty-six.

Jim: Thirty-six miles.

Henrik: Yah, fifty-some kilometers. Yah it runs in my blood because my mother taught me how to ski and her dad was from up in the valleys, just up by Lillehammer, you know, where the Winter Olympics were. I still have relatives up there. And then he used to make skis for himself and all the kids.

Jim: Oh my goodness.

Henrik: Yah, so he was sort of a carpenter.

Jim: Yah, that's a talent.

- Henrik: Yah, and he apparently was always bragging about his skiing abilities so I figure well, I got to keep up the tradition. And of course when I first came to Madison I walked out on Lake Mendota in my cross-country skis. You know one of these ice fish men looks at me and he says, “What’s the matter, you crazy or something?” (Both laugh). “You should be skiing on the hill,” he says to me. I said, “well I think you are more crazy, sitting here freezing to get that damn fish.”
- Jim: There weren’t many cross-country skiers then.
- Henrik: You couldn’t buy a pair of those skis, but I brought mine from Norway. Took another ten, twenty years before—
- Jim: Before it became popular?
- Henrik: Yah. They started selling. And now of course you can go out there and you see the students out there skiing. Of course now they skate-ski too They go --
- Jim: Yes, have you tried that?
- Henrik: I tried it, but you know, I’m too old for it. I’m an old dog and—
- Jim: That’ll break your hip. If you fall down.
- Henrik: I think that people said to me that that’s the natural way. I said, “you know, I don’t know any people that come like this down the street.” (Jim laughs) So I just do the diagonal skis and I mean look at this old [unintelligible] they’ve carried me so far and so maybe it’ll carry me the rest, I don’t know.
- Jim: Now, just get through the next year’s Birkebeiner.
- Henrik: Yah. Oh, I’ll --
- Jim: Well we gotta have snow first.
- Henrik: Well it’s getting a little iffy I’d say. I have my dad’s grandfather’s physician in Norway. And he lived way up in his eighties and his wife was even older and you know what they did—they had seventeen kids, can you imagine that?
- Jim: Terrible.
- Henrik: But back then there was no restriction—you could have all these kids. So the guy was a good musician, he was everything. Alright, so I figured,

well, maybe I got some of these better genes—where did you get your genes from, your dad or your mom?

Jim: My mother.

Henrik: Your mother. Was she Irish or—you are Irish, are ya?

Jim: She -- No, no Scottish.

Henrik: McIntosh Scottish?

Jim: Yah, and she is from half English half Scottish and my father was pure Scots.

Henrik: Pure Scot.

Jim: Yah, his father and mother immigrated to this country from Scotland.

Henrik: Oh really? So you have a clan even?

Jim: Oh yah I've already been back to Scotland and found the old home back there.

Henrik: Oh that's nice, where was it in Scotland?

Jim: Up near Inverness.

Henrik: Inverness?

Jim: Yah, up in the Hielans, as they say.

Henrik: Yes, Hielans they call it. (laughs)

Jim: The wild Hielans.

Henrik: Well, you know, it's funny because I've always wanted to go to Scotland because they talk about "kirk" for a church like we say "kirke" in Norway and "dal" for valley. So there's a lot of influence between the Norwegians—even Grieg, you know, people say, "I'm a member of the Grieg Chorus, singing in the Grieg Chorus." I remember the Greek origin. I say, you know that Grieg was really a Scotsman. They say, "What?!" Yah, his grandfather came from Scotland to Norway.

Jim: Oh I didn't know that.

- Henrik: His name was probably “Craig”. But the stupid Norwegian couldn’t pronounce it so they called him “Grieg.” (Both laugh.)
- Jim: (Laughing) Ah. That’s cute. Oh yes, that’s—do you know Trygve Lonnebotn?
- Henrik: Oh, yes, he took the job after, you know well, see, Norby has retired 00
- Jim: Yes, head of Torske Klubben.
- Henrik: Yah, and you know, we had a dinner at (unintelligible) and we said I can just talk about what you’re talking about now and so anyway—so I was the president and was introducing Trig and I said, “Trig has spread this rumor about me that I am the only one that speaks worse English—I have the worst Norwegian accent than he had.” (Laughs) So Trig got very embarrassed and turned red. I said, “No, no it’s not true, it’s a draw, it’s a draw.” We both had a horrible Norwegian accent. But you know, what can you do about it?
- Jim: Yah, it’s no trouble understanding you at all. It’s nonsense, don’t worry about that. Yah his wife—his first wife used to work for us. She and Mary and I.
- Henrik: Oh, Grynet, Grynet.
- Jim: Grynet, Yah.
- Henrik: Yah. She was kind of a trip, wasn’t she?
- Jim: Wild.
- Henrik: You know what happened to Trig’s—like what happened to many good Norwegian boys that come to Trondheim to be Engineers, that school of Engineers at Trondheim. They don’t realize it but these girls up there gunning for them. She got a hold of Trig and I don’t think he knew how to say no or something. So --
- Jim: She is so strong, she swept him right off his feet. She is the most determined young lady I think I’ve ever met in my life. Her father was an eye doctor.
- Henrik: Oh, was he up in Trondheim?
- Jim: Yes, in Trondheim and he came over here several times and I met him and found him a charming fellow but, boy, she was a pistol.

Henrik: She was a pistol.

Jim: Oh, she was just—she was our nurse for awhile but she was hard to control. She was just a willful, willful girl.

Henrik: Did she get married again?

Jim: I guess, I don't know. She got married again, but I know they got divorced.

Henrik: Yah. Trig I understand is keeping company with this very nice lady.

Jim: He's a nice, nice guy.

Henrik: He's a very nice guy.

Jim: But he's low-pressure and much too slow for her. She's on a different train.

Henrik: Yes, he's a bright guy though, Trig. He did a good job with working with the—

Jim: I knew they wouldn't stay married long—she was too restless. She wanted someone with more excitement.

Henrik: Yah, she is a little bit crazy, that's right. 'Cause I parked my car on Regent Street and here she had parked right behind me. and she saw that—she recognized me, she went into orbit immediately.

Jim: (Laughs) Greeted you like her long lost uncle.

Henrik: Yah, right, something like that.

Jim: Oh, I know that.

Henrik: Yah. She probably was a good nurse though, I'm sure.

Jim: She was very good.

Henrik: Yah. So you are all through totally, I mean, you don't have, keep an office?

Jim: No.

Henrik: Did you have an office with somebody else?

- Jim: Well, with Tony Schoenberger.
- Henrik: He was older, wasn't he?
- Jim: Oh Yah, seventeen years older. I started with him and then we added some three men after that over the years.
- Henrik: I had one of these biopsies recently by this guy Reginald Bruskewitz.
- Jim: Bruskewitz, at the university.
- Henrik: Yah, and that was a very painless thing, I told him, so I think he knows his business. I don't know, he --
- Jim: I think so.
- Henrik: So of course, now they have very good techniques for doing this type of thing.
- Jim: Right, well, you're old enough that you don't have to have any big surgery or anything like that. Even if they found a problem in there.
- Henrik: Oh you are conservative when it comes to treating [unintelligible].
- Jim: Oh, Yah. At age 80, nobody's interested in doing any heroic surgery. It's a disease that probably won't kill you anyway.
- Henrik: Well that's true. Yah, I have a cousin back in Norway—he just got plumbing job on him, and he says he's so happy now because he can go to the bathroom all the time without any troubles. Well that's interesting, to hear that you think after that point in time—would you treat it with hormones then or something?
- Jim: Or nothing.
- Henrik: Or nothing? I always had trouble I remember down at Madison General reading these biopsies for Mr. Gray. And trying to decide on if it was malignant or not malignant. You know, it's not that easy, really. And now of course they take all of these from different lobes which maybe couldn't do it—while Bruskewitz was very nonchalant about it. He says to me, "Well, you know, you don't have to have a biopsy unless you want." I said, "What do you recommend?" He said to do it so, okay. The PSA is not that reliable.
- Jim: Well, it's pretty reliable—it's a very specific test—particularly that fraction they're starting to do now.

Henrik: Oh they're doing a fraction—

Jim: Yah, fractionate—it's another PSA something-or-other—

**[End of Interview]**