

NAME

Smith-Paul-Interview-23-Sep-1986 side A.mp3

DATE

October 6, 2026

DURATION

46m 41s

2 SPEAKERS

Roger Leonard

Paul Smith

START OF TRANSCRIPT**[00:00:02] Roger Leonard**

This is Roger Leonard. It's September 23rd, 1986, and I'm about to record Paul Smith at his home on 12 Fraley Street in Red hook, New York.

[00:00:19] Paul Smith

Oh, you want to get the story?

[00:00:21] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:00:22] Paul Smith

Well, let's see now. Yeah, well, maybe I'll take the other one later. Yeah. Yeah, it's on now. Yeah. Oh, yeah. It's ongoing. Okay. Well, I was My name is Paul Smith. I was born in Germantown. Germantown Yeah, in Germantown, New York. And at the age of seven, my parents, They bought a farm on Williams Road near Spring Lake.

[00:01:03] Roger Leonard

Oh, I know where that is.

[00:01:04] Paul Smith

Yes, and I grew up on that farm and I went to Cook Town School.

[00:01:12] Roger Leonard

Oh, yes.

[00:01:13] Paul Smith

Up at the bottom of Turkey Hill. That's near where some of your good church people there. Is that the school town?

[00:01:22] Roger Leonard

That's the same school that Gallagher went.

[00:01:24] Paul Smith

To the same school and we went to. We were schoolmates. Oh, that's all the same time. And also Alice Gallagher, my sweetheart. Yeah. Yes. And we come to that. And then at the age of 21, I entered the service during World War One. And I, I could have claimed exemption working on a farm, but I felt it was my duty to go and serve my country.

[00:01:59] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:01:59] Paul Smith

Yeah. So that I did. And I had my physical in Mill Grove, mill, Millbrook, and the 4th of December 1917, I was called into service and Camp Upton, Yaphank, Long Island. And I joined a company, a 305th Infantry, 77th Division. And I trained there during the winter and the 12th of the following March 1918 in the early hours of the morning. We had notice to fight. So I recall after packing, I rested on the bedspring until daylight did. And then After breakfast, we marched to the station and we took the train to to Hoboken.

[00:03:00] Roger Leonard

Oh, yeah.

[00:03:01] Paul Smith

And then we boarded a ship there, and as we went up the gangplank, they gave us the postal cards that we could mail back home to our parents and also friends, whoever we wish. But that provided we landed safely on the other side. If we hadn't landed safely, they never would have received the cards.

[00:03:29] Roger Leonard

Oh.

[00:03:29] Paul Smith

So we started out alone, and from Hoboken the following morning, we had 12 ships and seven submarine destroyers in in the convoy. Wow. It took us 14 days to cross. We zigzagged to throw the enemy off. That's why it took us longer to cross. And within about two days of landing, we were up on deck and one of the soldiers shouted, see that big fish? We all looked and there was a periscope of a German submarine, and the destroyer saw him just about the time that we did. So the. The shot over and dropped a depth bomb. We used to call them ash cans. Yeah. Yeah. And the convoy passed over and they dropped the second one. But the first one they dropped. The pressure was so great that we thought that, that a torpedo had hit our ship in such a pressure, and they were quite near to us.

[00:04:44] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:04:45] Paul Smith

So we continued on and we landed in Liverpool, England. During the night. When we got up in the morning, I was the first we'd seen land or buildings in 14 days.

[00:05:02] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:05:02] Paul Smith

So they took us to shore and loaded us in and train, and we crossed from Liverpool to Dover, England, that day. We stayed in Dover that night and the following day. Then we again loaded in in ships and we crossed the English Channel. And we, we landed in, in in France. I can't just well, come to me. They just, they had just brought in a trainload of wounded English soldiers, and it was really a pitiful sight to see. And Calais, France. That's the word I wanted. That's where we landed. And they loaded us in boxcars and shipped us to the front. And we went and trained with the English there about three weeks.

[00:06:14] Roger Leonard

That must have been traveling.

[00:06:17] Paul Smith

Oh, yes. And it seems I don't know what happened, but after about three weeks, we were left there and loaded again in boxcars and were sent to the Lorraine front. And in the back of that sector of France. And that was mostly trench warfare.

[00:06:44] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:06:44] Paul Smith

And then from there, we went to the veil. From the veil to the ain. That was more open warfare. And we finally wound up in the Argonne Forest. Oh, yes. And that was that was the bad one. We landed up in the lines of about 10:00 that night. We traveled after dark so that we wouldn't be observed by the enemy. And I recalled a Frenchman shaking hands with me in an early hour of the morning before daylight. Our artillery and back opened a barrage on the German front line and airplanes. They went over and bombed and just break a day. We were ordered over the top, and actually they had destroyed the German front line, the barbed wire entanglement and everything destroyed it, so we had no problem in crossing, and I. My rank was corporal and I was laid in my squad. And where we crossed there was a dead German soldier, partly covered with. With ground that a shell had burst and had thrown the ground over him with a machine gun laying by his side. And then from the front line to the support there was a communication communicating trench. And as we traveled along that path, along the trench, we saw a German officer. He was standing in the trench at the entrance of a dugout.

[00:08:33] Paul Smith

He had taken off his helmet and his equipment and laid it all out on by him. And he was a little well, between just just almost or. Just the trenches would probably be about a foot above his hips. Remember that dam? And he threw up his hands, and he wanted to tell us that he was willing to be taken prisoner and that there were others there also. He pointed toward the dugout and they came out, three of them. One was wounded so badly that they had to carry him out. And one that did come out, he the shrapnel had torn his uniform so that it had broken his collarbone. And we could see the bones stick out through the opening in his uniform where the shell had torn it. The shrapnel. And we. And there was another squad of the platoon that captured three other prisoners nearby. So we continued on, and as we did, they opened. Then the Germans opened fire with the barrage. And when we could hear the shells, some of them. When they'd leave the guns and. And from that time we could tell pretty close, pretty near how close they were coming to us. And we just we dropped to the ground, and as soon as the shell exploded, if we were still alive, we'd get up and start walking, and we'd keep intervals of a few feet so that the shell did land and wouldn't get a whole bunch of us.

[00:10:30] Paul Smith

Just a few. But then after after that, we continued on and we came to a knoll, a sort of a incline, And they thanked us, with me, with the artillery and our platoon sergeant that morning. He asked if he could use my wristwatch. He had some special detail work he would like to do that day. He wanted to do. And I lent it to him. And he he was his position where he was wasn't quite as good as where I was with my men. And he wanted to ask me if they could come, if I had room there where we were. And with that, as he raised up, a shell came over and. And the shrapnel hit in the neck and and Tory's throat wide open. And after the fire had ceased, I took my wristwatch off his wrist and put it back on my wrist. And then we went on a short distance from there. And then they had machine guns set up. And a machine gun nest. So they started opening machine guns again. We, we, we went to the ground and lie down. And one of my buddies just a few feet from me.

[00:12:08] Paul Smith

He took off his helmet to rest his head. And a sniper got him. And just a few minutes after that, while we were still waiting there. One that was the closest that I came to it. As many as we were 258 strong when we went over. When I left the company, it was about 80 to 85. The old men left out of 258. But a few minutes later I was dazed and. But I had my helmet on and that saved my life. And that's that's really the nearest that I came to it. And many times I did come near to it, but that was the closest. And it put a big dent in my helmet. And after dazed me and I, when we went over, I clipped my hair off close to my head. And the helmet, those helmets, you know, weren't too comfortable. And I wore my overseas cap underneath and I cushioned. And I think that that helped to save my life, but put a big bump on my head. And after the, the while, when we got up to advance again, I left my helmet there. It was a big dent in it and picked up my dead buddies helmet and wore that from that time on.

[00:13:40] Roger Leonard

Is that.

[00:13:40] Paul Smith

Right? Yeah. And then as we advanced on and came to the an opening. Opening after leaving the Argonne Forest there was a town. Little town village by the name of Mark MARK. The Germans had a Red cross set up there. They had a garden. And one of my buddies, he was also from Red hook. His name was William Acker, a senior. His father was also. His name was William McAdoo. And some of the older people in your congregation probably remember that Sam Haner. He made barrels for Sam Haner and Koker Town. Oh, yeah. And so as we advanced on just beyond there If there was a garden where my buddy and I each pulled up a head of cabbage and carried it along with us. And when we got out in front of the town again, they opened up with machine guns and we both made a dive for the same shell hole, and they had us covered all that afternoon and after dark we got our local bearing what direction in that? And then we fell back and found our company and rejoined it. And then it was the we were in the lines 21 days without relief in the Argonne Forest. Not even a change of socks. Imagine that. Three weeks without even a change of socks. And at the end of this, the 21 days. We advanced 22 miles in 21 days. That's just a little bit better than a mile a day. It's like World War Two. They advanced 20 miles a day, but it was altogether different. War. It was. Yeah. And then as we Well, I, we we, we, as I say, we, we. Went back and joined our company. And after the 21 days, the 79th Division relieved us. They went in nine days. And then we went back in the line. And that was near the end of the war. And I was that's when I was aghast and came down with that terrible Epidemic of flu that was both in Europe and the United States. You heard read about it, and then I. Went to the hospital. I went to the hospital.

[00:16:48] Roger Leonard

How were you gassed? How did that happen? How were you gassed? How did.

[00:16:52] Paul Smith

That the hospital.

[00:16:54] Roger Leonard

Know when you were gassed?

[00:16:55] Paul Smith

Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah.

[00:16:58] Roger Leonard

How did that happen?

[00:17:00] Paul Smith

Well, you know, they they used to. So they put over a barrage and then they mix gas shells with them. And the gas shells would just pop a cap. And with the other explosions, you wouldn't know in that gas was heavy and it would seep along the, the ground. And, and I got a whiff of it and I, I couldn't keep on, I couldn't keep my gas mask on. And I started to vomit and it was just like inside my lungs. Going to burn. Burn out is terrible. And well, it just I that it wasn't, it was a. Trying to think of the name of it now. Well, anyhow, it was, it was a gas that burned when you. Yeah, yeah. When you inhaled it.

[00:18:02] Roger Leonard

Was that the mustard gas.

[00:18:04] Paul Smith

That that the mustard gas that I saw three of our boys over there that had been burned with mustard gas and they were in the hospital and they looked like leopards where the skin had peeled and red spots, and the new skin had started to come back on.

[00:18:23] Roger Leonard

Oh.

[00:18:23] Paul Smith

Yes. Yeah, yeah. And it's really Well, the first war. Last war is terrible, and I was only in the hospital just a few days before the arms were signed. Well, you see, when we went back in, that's when I when I went to the hospital. And when it happened. Yeah. Yeah. And I was in the hospital and over there, and I sent back on a hospital ship and landed in Newport News, Virginia, the 9th of February, 1919. I hope to be able to get home to have my birthday dinner at home, but I just couldn't make it. I was a day late. My birthday is the 17th and and I landed home 18th. I didn't know who I would find live or dead, but fortunately my family. They were all alive. And my sweetheart, Alice Gallagher, she was still living. And as you know very well who I'm talking about. And and then in 191922, the fifth day of September, we were married. Yeah. Came home, came back. And then Alice and my parents, they were the only ones that I corresponded with while I was over there. And just before we went over, the Knights of Columbus issued all of us a little Bible testament. And it was just small enough that I carried in my pocket right over my heart. Yeah. And the last time I went home, my wife or mother suggested it would be nice if we each read the same chapter the same day. Oh, yeah. And that's what we did. Sometimes I miss a day or two before I could catch up. But that's one of the things that and and that and a straight razor. Those two things I carried over with me and bang. Yeah. And then we were married in 1922, and we moved to Red hook in 1924. And we rented a place on East Market Street by the name of Mrs. Mrs. Halleck. And in 1928, we decided that we should either buy or build a home. And Abby and Ethel, his wife, and my wife were sisters.

[00:21:22] Roger Leonard

Oh, yes.

[00:21:23] Paul Smith

Yes. They. Yes, they live next door in this lot here where the house stands. He raised a Astors commercial commercially, so we were talking with him and we told him what our plans were. Run along a couple of days. He said you wouldn't be interested in that lot of ours there, would you? Well, we thought we said maybe we would. So we came to terms on to it, and we had a keel. Frank keel. I think his name is Frank Thiele, and he surveyed it and he then I said, after he surveyed it, I said, now, maybe it'd be nice if you just surveyed where the house should stand. So he did that? Yeah. And back in those days, The surveying of the land and the surveying of the house. What do you think it cost?

[00:22:29] Roger Leonard

I wouldn't guess.

[00:22:31] Paul Smith

\$10.

[00:22:32] Roger Leonard

Oh, wow.

[00:22:34] Paul Smith

Isn't that something?

[00:22:35] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:22:36] Paul Smith

They wouldn't look at you for that price today No, I guess not. Well, anyhow, when my wife entered into eternal rest the 1st of October 1982, and I've been living here ever since, and my daughter from Florida said to daddy, she said, I can't bear to think of you living up here in the snow alone another winter. So she said, I'll come up. And when we do everything together. And I'll take you back with me. And she has a place all picked for me and everything down there. And she says, it's just wonderful. She looked at several places and this this home where where I'm going is the old or older people, 62 and older. So see, everybody says that I'll be really be happy down there.

[00:23:49] Roger Leonard

Yeah. Well, I hope so.

[00:23:50] Paul Smith

Yes. Yeah. Well I know that it's kind of tough, you know, after living so many years, but then losing my wife and everything. And then I'll be near my daughter, and that will that will make life more comfortable and easier for me.

[00:24:09] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:24:11] Paul Smith

So I guess I touched pretty much on that. I could talk for 2 to 3 hours.

[00:24:20] Roger Leonard

We've got more tape here. What about Germantown? Where were you born? In Germantown.

[00:24:24] Paul Smith

Oh, you know where the traffic light is? In Germantown. About the second or third house on the left, North of the traffic light. Yeah, that's where I was born. Ages seven. That's when my folks bought the farm on it was really, you know, where the. Jim. Well, you know where the house is on the corner where you go up Spring Lake, dead end. You turn right or left? Yes. Well, you turn left. That's Williams Road now. Yes. And the first farm up in there?

[00:24:58] Roger Leonard

The first one.

[00:24:59] Paul Smith

First farm? Yeah. Douglas Smith was my father's name. And my middle name is Douglas Paul Douglas.

[00:25:07] Roger Leonard

And that's my son's name, Brian. That's my oldest son's name.

[00:25:11] Paul Smith

Yeah. Yeah.

[00:25:13] Roger Leonard

Today is his birthday.

[00:25:15] Paul Smith

Oh.

[00:25:16] Roger Leonard

Today is his birthday. It's his 18th birthday today.

[00:25:19] Paul Smith

Oh, yeah.

[00:25:22] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:25:24] Paul Smith

Yeah.

[00:25:24] Roger Leonard

Well, tell me about your farm.

[00:25:26] Paul Smith

Oh. The farm. Well, my dad had a fruit farm, mostly a fruit farm. And he had all kinds of fruit. Apples, pears, peaches, plums. Most any variety you could think of back in those days. Yes. And he kept usually about three horses, five cows, about 100 chickens. And it was really just the old time farmer, you know. But now the farming around here is altogether different. I bet it is. Yeah. They have the big farms now where, you know where they do do with the tractors.

[00:26:06] Roger Leonard

Yes.

[00:26:07] Paul Smith

And with the tractors in a big way. Yeah. Yeah. Any other questions?

[00:26:14] Roger Leonard

Well, tell me about the schoolhouse.

[00:26:17] Paul Smith

Oh, the schoolhouse.

[00:26:18] Roger Leonard

School there. What was that like?

[00:26:19] Paul Smith

Well, I guess all the galaxies. Well, Clinton Gallagher and Alice Gallagher.

[00:26:28] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:26:28] Paul Smith

And. Oh, and. And Ethel Gallagher married Clinton.

[00:26:35] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:26:36] Paul Smith

And Well, different one. And I don't know. You know, Pearl Burnett.

[00:26:43] Roger Leonard

Yes. Well, I've heard the name Pearl.

[00:26:46] Paul Smith

Her father was our school teacher. Her father was a schoolteacher. And we. It was at one. We always had turkey dinners. And Red hook were the first two to have turkey dinners. Yeah. Yeah. And he came down. He was going to deliver turkeys, I think, at the In Parish Hall near Lutheran Parish Hall, and he went in the grocery store. And when he came out, he came out between two cars, I think, and he was struck by a car and killed him on his way down here. That was Pearl Pearl's father. And he he he taught all the all the the grades up to high school. Yeah. And that and they see there's a difference again. You know where the schoolhouse stands. Yes. Yeah. It's been turned into a home now.

[00:27:52] Roger Leonard

Yes. Turkey Hill and Salisbury Turnpike.

[00:27:55] Paul Smith

Yes. Yeah. Yeah. You turn there and go to and go right on up Turkey Hill.

[00:28:01] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:28:02] Paul Smith

To Jackson Corner.

[00:28:03] Roger Leonard

Right.

[00:28:04] Paul Smith

Yeah. Yeah. Any any other questions.

[00:28:08] Roger Leonard

Or was it one room? Was it just one one room.

[00:28:13] Paul Smith

Oh, just one room. Yeah. That's right. Just one room. And a big fat stove. They call it. They called it, you know, right in the middle of the room. Yeah, yeah. And he took care of the heat and everything. Yeah. Just had a sort of an old hallway outside where we had a hook where we'd hang our hats and coats on.

[00:28:40] Roger Leonard

Yes.

[00:28:40] Paul Smith

And back in those days, one of the gifts Santa Claus would bring me would be a pair of felt boots. Oh, yeah. Do you remember the felt boot day? No boot. Well, they were about that same. And that would that would be a Christmas gift. And about once a year at Christmas, we'd have an orange in our stocking.

[00:29:01] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:29:02] Paul Smith

And things like that. But that's altogether different now. You go to the store any time.

[00:29:06] Roger Leonard

Buy them.

[00:29:09] Paul Smith

Yeah.

[00:29:11] Roger Leonard

Well, tell me more about Christmas.

[00:29:14] Paul Smith

Well we we had, we, we usually always had a nice old fashioned Christmas dinner. My mother would, would make up for it and had a Christmas tree, nice big Christmas tree all trimmed. And back in those days, they used to. My mother would string popcorn. You remember?

[00:29:40] Roger Leonard

Yeah. We still do that.

[00:29:41] Paul Smith

String popcorn on a thread. And that would be the trimming. Yeah. And of course, that was back in the days before it had electricity. Yeah. And we would burn candles, which was.

[00:29:54] Roger Leonard

It must have been dangerous.

[00:29:55] Paul Smith

But they were pretty careful with them.

[00:29:58] Roger Leonard

So I just have to see how that's going. Okay.

[00:30:01] Paul Smith

Yeah.

[00:30:05] Roger Leonard

Somebody said that there was a an automobile race that went through Red hook in 1908. Do you remember that?

[00:30:15] Paul Smith

No, I really don't.

[00:30:18] Roger Leonard

They said it was a race, an automobile race that went through town in 1980.

[00:30:22] Paul Smith

No, I don't remember that.

[00:30:24] Roger Leonard

I thought maybe.

[00:30:25] Paul Smith

1980. I was probably might have been. But I remember the old days when I was at the age of 18, my father said to me, you'll be good this year. Maybe I'll buy an automobile. So it was a subagent over in Tivoli by the name of Charlie Otis. And he would buy cars out of Pepsi. He subagent for the Ford Model T. Oh, yeah. So my dad went over and we went over and he ordered a model T Ford, a two seater and a few days when it arrived. We went over and I had my first lesson. And we went out. We had it out in the back. And it was the old vibrators, you know, had vibrators for each cylinder that created the electricity. And then the magneto that was built in the flywheel. And then you'd have like a hot shot that would give the ignition to start. No, no, you had to crank the cars. There was no starter. And they had a wire choke you with a little loop in it. You'd pull that out and that would choke it. And I remember we went out when I took him to take my first lesson. And he cranked and the car Because he tried a couple more times and in about the third time he got three pops, and that's all. So then he took the lid off of the vibrator case underneath the cowl, and he screwed on one of the vibrators. And then he got the four cylinder. So then he got it out and we went up to where the traffic light is turned right and back and forth there. He had just a certain place where we could turn back and forth. Yeah, I I came back home. I really never was a real farmer. I meant I was more inclined to be a mechanic.

[00:32:55] Roger Leonard

Were you? Yes, that's what I thought.

[00:32:58] Paul Smith

That Ford. I'm telling you that dad bought the first Ford. I think it was less than a year that I had the motor out of it. After he bought the car, he. He run the the wagons out of the wagon house and kept the car and. And so from that I worked. The first garage I worked was Arthur Traver.

[00:33:26] Roger Leonard

Oh yes.

[00:33:27] Paul Smith

Yeah, I, his wife played the organ there.

[00:33:31] Roger Leonard

Yes, yes. That's right.

[00:33:33] Paul Smith

Yeah. And then from there I went to where the Rexall Drug store is. They, the people that owned the garage and Ryan Bank Patterson. It was Patterson Auto sales. And I remember that. Donald Haskin.

[00:33:59] Roger Leonard

Yes. Oh, yes.

[00:34:00] Paul Smith

They had it. And I remember Donald Haskins. You heard the name? Yeah. And I made a saw a rig without a belt or anything. My dad took me down to the man by the name of Dave Lipman in Poughkeepsie. He had a junkyard down there. Motors. And I remember buying a auto, a Buick motor. And we brought it home. And I built it up and made a buzz saw. And I used to go around and saw wood with it. So I happened to be sawing wood for the Gallaghers and my wife's folks. And he came and he wanted to know if I would like to work there for them. And so we made a deal. And that's how I happened. I had an afternoon moving to Red hook. As I told you on East Market Street, well, it all worked out so nice that we moved and I went right to work there. And so then after a while, they closed that annex garage and I went to Rhinebeck and worked down there for Patterson Auto Sales. Okay. I'm bound to hit you.

[00:35:20] Roger Leonard

I'll just hold.

[00:35:21] Paul Smith

It and put it back.

[00:35:22] Roger Leonard

Okay.

[00:35:23] Paul Smith

And then after a while Stanton Tremper came over from Pine Plains. He and Harold were brothers. They had a garage over there, and he bought. What was the trailer property? They used to run a livery stable. That livery, their horse and buggy days, and they built a garage out front, and he bought the garage. And then after a while he came over one evening and he wanted to know if I might like to work for him. Well, we got together. I didn't have to carry my meals or anything. Had dinner and it worked out very well.

[00:36:10] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:36:10] Paul Smith

So then after the. And the war came along, World War Two I decided that perhaps I might like to go with IBM and go back and, and help again to defend my country. So I had the 1 or 2 of the boys that I knew had already joined IBM in Poughkeepsie. That's where they got the first foothold. Yeah. As you call it. And we made them polish for airplanes. High altitude flying forced the air in the motors. And I went down And before that Oh, that's a back door.

[00:37:03] Roger Leonard

Go ahead.

[00:37:05] Paul Smith

In fact, telling you about my buddy and I tuned in a shell hole. In fact, I rolled a cigarette and smoked that in the shell hole. They had us covered with a machine gun. Yeah, I told them after we had pulled up a head of cabbage after leaving the Argonne Forest, going through a German Red cross. They had a Red cross station there in the garden, and they had some cabbages. So we pulled up one and it was what did they say? Well, anyhow, my buddy and I pulled up head cabbage and we chewed on that, and they had a skull with machine guns that afternoon we get out there until the evening? Yeah. Yeah. Yes. That was pretty wonderful. That dedication that came with the. When they came with the old

[00:38:10] Roger Leonard

The airplane. The airplane propeller.

[00:38:13] Paul Smith

Well, I worked on the down in the old, what they called the old canning factory. That was where they first got foothold. Then they built what they called number one building up on the hill. And they made their own rifles, their automatic rifles. But I did I made tools for the different machine tool making and grinding and, and brazing and silver soldering, you know, with a torch and firing my own boss. I, of course, I did have a manager, naturally. But And then after the war. After. Then I went up on the hill with a typewriter and went in manufacturing of type. And then in later years, you know, that was transferred to Kingston. And that was just wonderful. And instead of traveling all the way to Poughkeepsie, why I all I had to do was just cross the bridge to Kingston about 12 minutes. And I was there. And I was with IBM 18 years. And and I retired from, I went with him in 19th May 1943. And I retired the first day of April 1961. Is that right? I think I every 18 by 18 years with him. Yeah, yeah. And it's just a wonderful outfit, wonderful company to work for. And, and they really keep a jump ahead of the union. I think, you know, the union with some companies, I guess it's pretty wonderful. But but really I have never had any problems with them and I've been now doesn't seem possible that I've been retired would be what, 25 years? Yeah. 61, 86.

[00:40:27] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:40:28] Paul Smith

Think of it. It doesn't seem possible.

[00:40:31] Roger Leonard

You played on the baseball. You mean softball team in red?

[00:40:35] Paul Smith

Yes, yes. Yeah.

[00:40:37] Roger Leonard

Tell me about that.

[00:40:38] Paul Smith

Well, you mean well, not not actually, I didn't actually we we had a just sort of back in the in the days when I played, we are a brotherhood.

[00:40:52] Roger Leonard

Yes.

[00:40:53] Paul Smith

Yes, the brotherhood of the church. Yes. We would go around different places and play other teams like Rhinebeck and different places like that.

[00:41:03] Roger Leonard

What was it, softball or hardball? Hardball or softball?

[00:41:07] Paul Smith

Softball. Softball. No. No. Hardball. No. But I know baseball has been one of my interests in my life.

[00:41:21] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:41:22] Paul Smith

Yes.

[00:41:23] Roger Leonard

Tell me what the village of Red hook looked like a long time ago. What did it used to look like.

[00:41:30] Paul Smith

Back in the day? Pastor, when I was on the farm, being raised on the farm we had no no macadam roads. The first underneath this, the blacktop that they have, the first they put concrete in.

[00:41:47] Roger Leonard

Oh.

[00:41:48] Paul Smith

Did they. Yeah, that's a base. That was many, many years ago. And of course, you know, after a while that cracks up.

[00:41:56] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:41:56] Paul Smith

And instead of replacing that, well, that's when they started the blacktop building. So it makes a good foundation underneath. And back in those days, like when I was talking about the model T Ford, back in those days, they had ruts in the road. Yeah. And in the spring of the year, the wagons would make ruts and then you'd have to see saw around to go places. Yeah. Because on account of the surface being soft, you know. Yeah. But then after a while they came to the macadam and that that helped a lot. Today you don't, you don't, you don't see a Unless it's just a driveway or something. Yeah, yeah, that's what it's covering. And even the driveways today are like that.

[00:43:00] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:43:00] Paul Smith

Yeah.

[00:43:01] Roger Leonard

Well, tell me about the winters back then. Where do you think the winters were worse?

[00:43:06] Paul Smith

Yes. Well, back in those days, the the neighbors would all get together and they would shovel the snow drifts.

[00:43:16] Roger Leonard

Oh.

[00:43:17] Paul Smith

And we had a big snowstorm and have a stone wall fence on either side of the road. And that would build up snow and make banks. So then we would my folks in a different neighbors would get together and they would shovel the roads, snow out. And I recall one place over the neighbors that lived just north of us that he there was a hill. They cut those hills down quite a bit. Now, you know what they were years ago? They made them pretty much all leveled, filled in. And I recall where the snowdrift was so deep that one man would stand on a shelf, and the other man would throw the snow up to him, and he'd throw it up on the top. That's how deep some of the snow drifts were. And then usually after he had one of those big, heavy snowstorms, my dad would go to the grocery store all the way here to Red hook. It was a man here by the name of E.B. Smith. His name was he called him every day and he had a grocery store, you know, where the tobacco Thank to you.

[00:44:44] Paul Smith

You used to be. It isn't now, but it's still. The sign is there. This store is just this side. And he by when you're speaking of that, now reminds me something else. When I, I think 19 years old, I had an aunt and uncle living up in the Adirondacks, and he was Superintendent of the Northern Ironworks up there in a little town by the name of Standish on Chateaugay Lake. And they molded pig iron. And I went up there and I used to go up hunting with a guy up there. He made he hunted fox hunted during the winter. He made a living that way. He had fox hounds. And I used to travel with him on. My uncle had what they call snare bows or. Are Bearpaw snowshoes. You know what they're like. No tail down. I probably wore them out for a while there. We started out in the morning. I enjoyed it, you know. We went out this day and he had a fox going. And this bear, mother bear. The fox went through right near where she had her nest. They hibernate, you know, during the winter.

[00:46:11] Roger Leonard

Yeah.

[00:46:12] Paul Smith

And there were two cubs there. And we, it was along that evening where they had a general store in Standish. Just one store like the old fashioned store. They had benches all the way around, you know, instead of self service or everything would we would be back in the counter. So we were down there and the wood would.

END OF TRANSCRIPT



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