An Oral History

with

David B. (Burr) Udall (part 1)

Tucson, Arizona

conducted by
Julie Ferdon

October 15, 1998

The Morris K. Udall Oral History Project
University of Arizona Library, Special Collections

© 1998
The University of Arizona Library
Arizona Board of Regents
All Rights Reserved
JF: Good morning. This is Tape 27 of the Morris K. Udall Oral History Project. It's Thursday, October 15, [1998], and we are at the office of David Burr Udall, 33 North Stone, Suite 1700, in Tucson, Arizona. My name is Julie Ferdon, and I would like to welcome Burr Udall to another in a series of oral history interviews that form the Morris K. Udall Oral History Project.

Burr, thank you for participating.

DBU: You're welcome.

JF: I'd like to start this interview by asking you the origin of your name. I assume the "David" came from your grandfather, David King, or your great-grandfather.

DBU: I think from David King, I don't know. There's hundreds of David Udalls. My dad had a friend named Burr Porter, who was a rancher up there. So that's where the Burr comes from.

JF: That's where the Burr comes from, okay.

DBU: He gave me a cow and a calf for being named after him.

JF: Is that right?! (DBU: Yes.) How long did you have those?

DBU: Oh, I don't know. Dad sold them probably before I was two or three, I guess--four or five--put the money in the Zion National Bank.

You don't want to hear about me--you want to talk about Morris.

JF: No, I don't, I want to hear about you! (laughs)

DBU: When I was going to school at the U. of A., I needed money, and I wrote that bank, and I said, "Send me the money." And they wrote back and said, "The only person who can withdraw the money is Levi S. Udall." So I wrote them a letter saying, "Please send the money to my son," and gave them the address, and signed "Levi S. Udall." It came by return mail. (laughter) When Dad died, I got the job of going through his office, and Dad threw nothing away. There were a bunch of things that had to be signed, and I signed them all, and I signed Levi S. Udall, and nobody ever.... He and I wrote a lot alike.

JF: Oh, I remember signing Mo's name. (laughs) In fact, I remember during the presidential campaign, a check or something signed actually by Mo, bounced because they didn't think it was his signature! (laughter) Do you happen to recall where the names "Stewart" and "Morris" came from? Again, I know the King and I know the Lee.

DBU: Well, Morris I'm not sure of, and I have to get something, so let me move a little. The Stewart comes from that.

JF: Oh, okay, from Eliza Louella Stewart.
DBU: Right.

JF: Born in 1937.

DBU: No, she died in 1937, I hope. (chuckles)

JF: Oh, okay, died in 1937. Yes, David King Udall's wife.

DBU: Yes, our grandmother, wife number one.

JF: Okay, that answers that.

DBU: But Morris? I don't know. Elma might know. I don't know. I've never known where "Morris" came from. There was a guy up there, a good friend of Dad's, named Morris Borris. It could have come from that, but I don't know that.

JF: Okay. You were born in 1929 (DBU: Correct.) in St. Johns.

DBU: In the front room.

JF: Oh, that was going to be my next question, were you born at home or in the hospital?

DBU: No, they didn't have a hospital. According to Elma, I was born on the twentieth of January, which is Dad's birthday. And when he got mad at me, he always said, "You're the worst birthday present I ever had!" But anyway, Elma said that when the time was there, that they sent all the kids up to Uncle Grover's farm so that Mom could scream and holler and do everything that she wanted to do, and they wouldn't have to hear it. And they'd just added what was the dining room in our house. I think the day I was born was the day they moved into it, it was finished.

JF: Oh, really?!?

DBU: Yes. And that's where I was born.

JF: So you were born in the room of the brand new house.

DBU: Right.

JF: A good way to dedicate it!

DBU: A good way to start off, for sure! (laughter)

JF: Were all of Levi and Louise's children born at home?

DBU: To my knowledge, every one of them.

JF: And that was, I gather, pretty much how it was done then?
DBU: Yes. They had a guy up there named Ollie Overson. He was the midwife. They never had a doctor up there. I mean, they had a doctor in the mid thirties, who was there about a year, who was a drunk. But everybody was born at home. And Ollie was a pig farmer, but he was also the midwife. So when the women got close, they went down to see him, to make sure he was going to be in town.

JF: Even now, the main medical clinic is in Springerville.

DBU: Yes, it is. It seems to me the nearest place to St. Johns that had any doctors was either Gallup, New Mexico, or Globe. There wasn't anything at Holbrook. Flagstaff had something.

JF: But nothing in Holbrook?

DBU: No.

JF: Interesting. Now, you were the youngest, then, of six children. (DBU: Exactly.) I'm the youngest myself, in my family. Did you find that any advantage or disadvantage growing up?

DBU: No, I don't think so. I was thinking, coming down this morning, because I didn't know what you were going to do, and I don't know why it went through my head, but when Stewart was appointed the secretary [of Interior], some reporter from The New York Times went to Phoenix to interview Mom. I tell this story, because I guess it answers your question--I tell stories, you know that. (JF: Good!) But Mom called me, and said, "These people from big cities are crazy. This lady came out to do a story about Stewart," and she asked Mom the question, "When did you first realize that Stewart was the smartest and most important one in the family?" And her answer was, "I haven't yet." (laughter)

JF: Good for her!

DBU: I think maybe being the baby, I got a little of the best of it--for a while. But Mom and Dad--I mean, it was true with all of us. Morris, with one eye, wasn't treated any different than anybody else was.

JF: They were pretty even-handed with you all?

DBU: Yes, they were. Yes, they were.

JF: I'd like to ask some questions about your siblings as children, to the extent that you remember. (DBU: Okay.) Let's start with Inez, your oldest sister, born in 1915, so she was, I guess, about fourteen years older than you. Did you know her very well?

DBU: Yes and no. Unlike Chandler, I don't remember what happened when I was one year old. My memory is pretty spotty, back when I was young. But, I think Inez started Flagstaff Teachers College in 1934, I want to say, so I was about five then. Then she was gone, teaching. Then her husband was--I think he was in the Navy, I don't remember exactly--but during the war, she came
back to St. Johns and taught high school. She taught English and Spanish, and I was one of her students, and I babysat her oldest child, who was a girl named Louise.

JF: Did she teach in the school system?

DBU: Yes.

JF: And she taught Spanish and....

DBU: And English.

JF: Okay.

DBU: We had seven teachers in that high school.

JF: When did she marry?

DBU: I want to say 1939 or 1940, but I'm really not sure.

JF: And what did her husband do?

DBU: Her husband was a teacher also, and then after the war he taught some. Gene Turley was his name. He got involved in business, and I couldn't tell you what, and they had all sorts of domestic problems, eventually got divorced, which is kind of unusual for Mormons. Well, what the hell, Morris got divorced all the time. But back then, it was kind of unusual.

JF: Do you know when that was, approximately?

DBU: No, I don't. Elma would know, but I don't.

JF: Did she remarry ever?

DBU: No.

JF: Did he, do you know?

DBU: No, he did not. And he died about a year-and-a-half ago. He died after Inez died. He was at her funeral.

JF: Did they remain Mormons?

DBU: Yes, Gene came from the Mormon colonies in Mexico. That's where he came from.

JF: How about Elma? She was born in 1917, two years after Inez. What do you remember about her growing up?
DBU: Well, actually not a heck of a lot. She and I agree she was my surrogate mother. She was the right age, so I was the one that she had to take care of. But she probably left in 1935, 1936. She went to Flagstaff for a while, came down here and worked at the U. of A. She's the most interesting person in our family--I've always said that--Elma is. And she was the secretary down here. She always told this story, probably still does. I can't remember whether it was Lesher or the other guy--his name will come to me. But the first time she went over to get a paycheck, she walked in and he said, "Elma Udall, you must be a Mormon." And she said, "Why?" And he said, "Well, the Catholics name their children [after] people [in] the Bible, and the Mormons just dream up names." (laughter)

JF: So she was working for a law firm while in Tucson?

DBU: No, she was a secretary at the U. of A., and what department, I don't have any idea, back then.

JF: So did Inez or Elma go to college?

DBU: Yes. Inez graduated--she went for four years at NAU and got her degree. Then in about.... When the hell did I have the back surgery? In 1948, 1949, along in there. Elma all of a sudden figured out that she was the only one in the family that didn't have a college degree, and she went back to school at ASU and got her degree.

JF: In 1949?

DBU: Yes.

JF: Good for her! Now, I understand she's sort of the genealogist for the family.

DBU: That is true.

JF: And although she apparently got into that much later in life, she related in her oral history that when she was a teenager, your father, Levi Udall, gave blessings to the family, and the blessing that he gave her was that she would be a genealogist. Did all of Levi's children get patrician's blessings?

DBU: Well, we all got blessings. I can remember in the late thirties, we had so damned many cousins--you know, Mom's family and Dad's family--and Elma always prided herself, she was the--Dad would always get after [us], "Name all your cousins." Elma's the only one that could do it. (chuckles) And I think there were fifty-four Udalls that she had to know by name.

JF: So that's probably where he saw that coming.

DBU: Yes. And she spent a lot of time and a lot of her own money, once she got digging into that stuff, and that's why I grabbed this thing. That comes from her. She gave every one of us this thing.
JF: That's a great family tree.

DBU: I don't know where she found all the pictures.

JF: They look original.

DBU: Yeah, they do, but she probably had them copied at some place or other. I'll get things out as we go here.

JF: Now, was the patrician's blessing, was it often sort of a predictive thing, like, "You will be the family genealogist?"

DBU: It could be. I mean, a lot of people kind of did it that way. But it wasn't normally--at least to my knowledge. You weren't necessarily going to have to do whatever they said you ought to do, or they thought you were going to do. It didn't work that way.

JF: Right, right. Do you recall what your blessing was?

DBU: No. No idea.

JF: Was that something all Mormon fathers did, or was that something your father did as stake president?

DBU: I think it was something Dad did as the stake president. And they had patriarchs who'd do it, in the Church, but Dad did it because of his position with the Church, not because he was [our] father.

JF: Yes. Stewart, your oldest brother, was born two years after Elma in 1920, making him about, I believe eight years older than you.

DBU: Right.

JF: What are your recollections of Stewart as a boy?

DBU: Well, my biggest recollections of Stewart are, we had a farm about three miles out of town, and we farmed with horses. We didn't have tractors up there--they were still in the eighteenth century for a long time. And Stewart did two or three things. Number one, he was.... Morris was a good farmer, I was a good farmer, Dad was a good farmer. Stewart was terrible. Stewart, even back then, was like he is now. I mean, his head was out here someplace. He was always thinking about something. Whatever we were doing, when we got to the farm, his team, you hooked up first and got him out on the job, because you knew in ten minutes they'd be back. (laughter) He paid no attention to the fact that he had a bunch of horses out there who were big and strong, and he'd be worried about whether Hitler was going to do this, or the Depression was going to happen.

JF: Sort of the "head in the clouds" syndrome?
DBU: Yes. There's not a heck of a lot of change. And the other thing I'll never forget about Stewart is—and he's good at it, he's still good at it—but every day he would go through a dictionary and find a word he didn't know, and use it all day long. I mean, you just wanted to choke him. (laughter) Whatever the word was.

JF: I'll bet that helped your vocabulary!

DBU: Yes, it did, and it helped his. I don't know if they still do it at the U. of A. or not, but they used to have a thing out there when I was there, and before I was there, called the Allenwood Contest, and it was open to anybody at the University of Arizona. I think the prize was twenty-five dollars—it may have been fifty dollars—a lot of money back then. And it was to define 100 words. They'd give you the words, and I think you had an hour, maybe an hour-and-a-half. He won it every year. And they used to run stories in The Wildcat years ago about here'd be a word that most everybody knew, and here's all these educated people, and their definition of it would just blow you off the wall. You'd think, "How could people going to college be that way about it?!" But they were.

JF: So he was the intellectual?

DBU: Yes. He was always... He was well-read. We're all well-read. I shouldn't say that, but Stewart, he liked opera and things like that—maybe Mom did—but I don't think most of us did. Stewart's head has always been in the clouds. I mean, even today. He hasn't changed at all. I don't guess most of us have. My memories of him, those are the two big things that stand out with me and Stewart, was him bein' such a lousy farmer (chuckles), and those words.

JF: A good student?

DBU: Yes. Yes, I think we were all pretty decent students.

JF: Would you like some time to find something?

DBU: No, I can do it. My wife doesn't believe this, but I can talk and do these things as we go.

JF: Okay. How about Morris? He was born in 1922. What do you remember about him as a boy? How would you describe him?

DBU: Morris was—I think the rest of us—the same way then as he was as an adult. I remember when I was little, my biggest boast was my brother could take his eye out—and he could and did! Morris was always an organizer. They didn't have Little League and all that stuff up there—probably didn't exist back then. But he'd always organize the little kids—me and everybody else—and he was the pitcher when we played softball in the back yard. He was very good at getting that sort of stuff done. Some of the things I remember about Morris—and I was probably seven or eight, I’d guess—but he had a glass eye, literally glass. Two or three times a year, Mom would write to this outfit in Salt Lake City, and they sent down a case that was two or three inches wide, and about eighteen inches long, that had twenty-four glass eyes in it. And it was a family project. You sat
him down and poked eyes into that socket until you found one that fit the socket. It didn't make any difference whether it matched the good eye or not, if it fit the socket.

JF: Oh, so it wasn't the color you were matching it for, it was the size.

DBU: It was the size. And then, the way I remember it, [Mom] would keep two eyes, and then mail them back to them.

JF: Did he ever have mismatched eyes, color-wise?

DBU: I think so. And the thing that.... I don't know why I even remember this, but I do--for four or five, six years, we slept in the same bed together. In that house there were three bedrooms. Mom and Dad slept in one bedroom, and the three girls slept in another bedroom, and then the boys' bedroom was one bed, and Morris and Stewart slept there. They used to in the wintertime--I still do--I sleep hot. So I was the bed warmer. They put me in everybody's bed, and then by the time I went to sleep, they put me out on the damned porch where it was ten degrees above zero, and that's where I slept. But anyway, when we slept together--and I don't know about later years, I never did ask him--I guess it's kind of like taking out false teeth or something--but when he went to bed, he took the eye out. He had a glass of water that he put salt in and put that eye in it. I don't know, even today, when I go to bed, I take a glass of water with me, because if I wake up in the night, I want a drink. So a lot of times, I'd wake up and grab it, and I'd end up with an eye in my mouth that I wasn't expecting.

JF: A good Halloween story! (laughter)

DBU: Get the wrong glass. Morris was a good farmer, he really was. Mom, Dad, the town--I mean, nobody, to my knowledge, ever treated him any different because he was missing an eye. That was a given fact. So you didn't worry about a lot--and you've probably heard this, but when he went to Denver to play pro basketball that one year, the Denver Nuggets, it was their first year of pro basketball, and they wanted basketball players, but they also wanted good people. It was important to start. So they came to the university, they talked to everybody, they went to St. John's, they interviewed people, and they never knew he had one eye. He told me he'd been there two months and the coach was a little short guy, and he came out and looked at him, he said, "Udall, which one can't you see out of?" And how they found that out, I don't know. But it was never anything that I remember anybody talking about.

JF: It's amazing the depth perception he must have had with only one eye.

DBU: Yes. I think a lot of it was, he lost it when he was so young. [If] you [or] I would lose one [now], we'd have a terrible time. But he learned to deal with it. When he came here to go to school at the university, he signed up for ROTC, and they had him read the eye chart, and he did this and did that, and they thought he was perfectly fine.

JF: Yes, he just covered the same eye, didn't he?
Yes. In a few months or whatever, some guy was trying to get in, and he had flat feet and they wouldn't let him in. He said, "What's that got to do with it?! You got a one-eyed guy in there!" They said "Who?!" (laughter)

Whoops!

The things I kind of remember, but I'm not real clear with, but your day started--my day started, I'm sure their day started--you got up in the morning, you made sure the fire was still going in the kitchen so Mom could cook breakfast. I don't remember that fire ever going out.

Do you remember what time you were up in the morning?

About 5:30, quarter to six.

And was the fire in a fireplace, or was this a stove fire?

A stove. Somebody put wood in it when we all went to bed. But that was the first thing, to make sure that fire was going. Then you went down and milked the cow and slopped the hog and chopped the wood, and all that stuff. They could hardly wait 'til I was old enough to milk the cow, because they didn't have to anymore.

"They" meaning Stewart and Morris?

Yes. (chuckles) Inez was the oldest, she was the cow-milker, 'til Stewart got big enough.

So the girls had farm duties as well?

Oh, sure. So I can kind of vaguely remember that they were both very interested in making sure I knew how to milk, because that was one chore they didn't have to put up with. Morris, in high school--what would I have been? He got out of high school in 1939 or 1940? Do you remember? I think it was 1939.

I think 1939, that's what I would guess.

I think so. So I was ten by the time he left to go to high school. And that [George]Genung story I was telling you--that was 1939, I remember when those guys came up there. So basically, up 'til the time he went to the university, my involvement with him, and with Stewart--I think Stewart went on his mission in 1939, but I'm not sure of that, either. It could have been 1940.

Where did he go on his mission?

The Mormon Church has a very good CIA, and if you have any good Mormon friends, I'll give you a clue. In 1912, they pulled all their missionaries back, because the world was going to go to war. In 1937, they did it again. So anytime I see my good Mormon people, I ask them, "Are the missionaries still out there?" Stewart was going to go to Australia, but because they pulled them back, they sent him to Erie, Pennsylvania. Then they sent him to New York City.
JF: And was he gone two years then?

DBU: Basically, yes.

JF: Did Morris do a mission?

DBU: No. Stewart did, and then Inez, when Inez was sixty-eight, seventy, she went on a mission for a year. They sent her to New York City, which made no sense to me, because she was very fluent, always had been, in Spanish. And maybe there's a big Spanish community back there. No, Stewart's the only one of us that ever went, other than that.

JF: Okay. Eloise, born in 1924.

DBU: I was going to tell you some more Morris stories.

JF: Oh, good! All right, terrific. The more stories, the better.

DBU: I had to be about ten or eleven--maybe I was twelve, maybe it was during the summer when he came back before the war. Morris was a very good poker player, always had been. The Mormon Church, when you're twelve, you're an adult. I mean, in my family, we talked a lot of things, but the main thing we talked was politics. Until I reached twelve, nobody cared what I thought. When I was twelve, Dad would go, "All right, what do you think, Inez? What do you think...." At twelve, he would say, "All right, Burr, what do you think?" And I quit going to church, Morris quit going to church. You've been to St. Johns....

JF: Yes.

DBU: Okay. The church was just right across the street from where we lived--so was the high school. And Mom was teaching the class that I should be in, up on the second floor of that old church.

JF: Now, what grade was this?

DBU: I think I was eleven, twelve, something like that. It was just age groups with the church, as compared to, you know, first or second grade.

JF: Was this a church school or public school?

DBU: Church. They still do that. And anyway, we had a basketball court in the front of the house, and after about two Sundays, Mom came home and said, "The least you could do is to respect me and not play basketball when I'm teaching the class that you ought to be in, where everybody else is looking at you." That seemed like a legitimate request. But what would happen is, they had a poker game. The only guy I can remember—there were a lot of people that played. It started at our house at 10:15 on Sunday morning, after Mom and Dad went to church, and it lasted 'til about a quarter to twelve, and then we moved down the street to another house, and then we moved up to
the newspaper, and then at the end of the day we moved out to a farmhouse out on the hill, where you had the lanterns--it didn't have power.

JF: So you played poker all day on Sunday?

DBU: And the rule was, Morris' rule was, when he got fifty dollars ahead, I could play. So I sat around and didn't play for a lot of the time. And he, at one point--I don't know if he ever did get paid--he had a third mortgage on the printing presses at the newspaper. The editor, he wasn't a very good poker player. When Morris was in the Army and overseas, and I think a first or second lieutenant--whatever in the hell he was--made like $125 a month. He was sending home like $350, $400 a month. And Dad never could figure it out.

JF: This was from his poker winnings?

DBU: Yes.

JF: And he was sending them home for the help of the family?

DBU: No, he was sending it home to put in a savings account for him.

JF: Okay.

DBU: Then when they sent him back from whatever island he was on, they sent him, it seems to me, to San Francisco. And he got off the boat and sent home, I think, like a thousand dollars, and bought a brand new car with what he'd won playing poker on the boat. He was good at it, he was very good at it.

JF: Did he teach you how to play?

DBU: Yes.

JF: How did your parents react when--did you just decide you weren't going to go to church anymore?

DBU: Yes. I just said, "I'm not going." Like I said, I'm an adult, and I can do what I want to. The reaction was, "This is why you ought to go."

JF: Had your brothers already left the Church by then?

DBU: Stewart hadn't. Stewart was on his mission. But Morris pretty basically had. And that's probably why I did. I wasn't smart enough to do it on my own, I don't think. I think that Morris, me, whoever--our folks, they never forced you to do anything. They tried to reason with you and convince you were wrong. But once I said no, it didn't die there; it'd come up from time to time. But nobody ever said, "Get your butt here, we're going to church."

JF: Why did you decide to leave?
DBU: I don't know. Looking back on it, I don't have any idea why I did. Probably I was lazy.

JF: Your sisters all continued to be with the Church?

DBU: Yes, very close.

JF: I always kind of wondered about that.

DBU: Yes. I know, going backwards, with Inez, when I said when Dad died I got the job of going through all of his stuff. And I'm sure I threw away a lot of things that had some historical value. But my father never threw anything away. I mean, he had correspondence from 1918 in there. He had a file for all of his children, each letter we had ever written to him, and each letter he had ever written to us. He had a file called "Children-finances." And it starts off with Inez. That's why I said 1934. It says, "Inez, 1934, first semester, Flagstaff, room, books, board, tuition, $34."

JF: Wow!

DBU: And then as each of us came along, when he gave you money, you went on the ledger. Stewart's the one who really got to him, more than any of the rest of us, as I learned. This isn't my story, but I got out of high school, went in the Army, got the G.I. Bill, came down here, worked at the infirmary, and I never asked my folks for anything. I was self-sufficient until my last year in law school and the G.I. Bill had run out. I went to Dad and I said, "I've still got the infirmary job, but I need some help." And he said, "Okay, what do you want?" And I said, "Well, the government sends me $75 a month. That's what I want." Of course there was books and stuff. And he said, "Well, if you didn't smoke and you didn't drink, you could get along on $30 a month." I said, "I'm not here to negotiate it. I want the $75." So he reluctantly sent it to me. And that's when I come on the list, is the early fifties, and it says, "David Burr, parentheses, repayable." Now, I'm the only one in the family that said "repayable." Nobody else was "repayable."

JF: You're probably the only one who offered.

DBU: No, I didn't offer! (laughter) I think he was so mad at me for drinking and smoking--and I would do it in front of him--that by God, I was going to pay the money back! I had to think that through for a long time.

JF: So you worked in the infirmary at the U. of A.?

DBU: Yes, we all did.

JF: Okay, because I thought Mo had worked there.

DBU: Stewart did first.

JF: He did first, okay.
Actually, the infirmary job was a jock job, and they got it for athletes. There was a lady over there who's been dead for a long time, by the name of Helen ["Bo"] Bocock, and she was the R.N. and she ran it. I had back surgery the year that Morris went to Denver.

JF: What was the surgery for?

DBU: I had two ruptured disks in my lower back. I had back problems ever since.

JF: From sports?

DBU: Lifting bales on the farm. And I can tell a lot of stories about that, but I won't. But anyway, when I had the back surgery, it was back when they were experimenting back then--as I learned from my doctor later. I wasn't going to go to school, I hurt so bad. And then Morris was going to go to Denver, and he talked to Miss Bocock, and she offered me the job, so I came down and took it. It was too good, I couldn't afford not to take that job. And I took the fewest units that you could take and still stay legal at the university.

JF: Where did you have your surgery?

DBU: Phoenix--Good Sam [Good Samaritan Hospital]. It was kind of funny. They had a deal in Springerville for a while, and when I was having all the back problems, before I went in the Army, I went to see him, Dad sent me to see him. When I got out of the service, I was having lots of trouble. I never did go on sick call with the Army. But Dad said, "Okay, this D.O. is still--he's in Phoenix, go see him." So I went over and saw him. He poked and pushed and he said, "You ought to go see a doctor." That's what I thought I was doing! (laughter) And then one thing led to another, and I had the surgery. They had me twenty-four days in bed before they let me up. The guy who did the surgery at that time lived right across the street from my folks. And anytime I'd come back, and he knew it, he'd come over and get me on the floor and push and poke. I finally said to him, "Why?!" He said, "Most of my patients I don't see. A month after the surgery you never see them again." And I said, "Why was I in bed so long?" And he said, "We were experimenting. We didn't know what we were doing, and the people in the East were getting them up within three or four days. The people in the Midwest were getting them up in ten days, and the people in the West were keeping them in bed for three weeks."

JF: So this was an intentional thing?

DBU: Yes. That's kind of, you had to have some guinea pigs. Now, you have that surgery....

JF: And they get you up the next day!

DBU: Yes, you're up in twenty-four hours, and you're out in three days.

JF: Do you remember the doctor's name?

DBU: Eisenbise [phonetic spelling].
JF: Okay.

DBU: I mean, when I was in Good Sam, I wasn't a happy camper. Dad loved surgery, he came and watched. I had chest surgery, he came and watched. But once surgery was over, he and Mom left. I'm sure they went back up to the White Mountains, but it was July, and it was the time that the court was in recess. He had a law clerk who would come twice a week to make sure I was all right. Elma was there going to school, and I'd see her off and on. So one night, it's about Day 19, I don't remember, about four in the morning, and I'm not very happy, being in that bed. And I wake up, and there's a priest and a nun with one of those hospital trays with all of this incense and stuff, and he's shaking me and he said, "I'm here to give you the last rites." And I said--I mean, I was wide awake by then! (laughter) I said, "The doctor never told me I was that bad off!" Then I said, "I'm a Mormon." And he left, and the nun stood and held my hand, and I'm looking around thinking, "What the hell's going on here?!" Then he came back and he said, "You can go back to sleep. We got the wrong room." (laughter) "Oh, good!"

JF: Oh, brother! Now, when did you have chest surgery?

DBU: Forty years ago. I had valley fever. Everybody has valley fever, and I developed a hole in this lung that would never close, and it just sealed off, so they took out part of that lung. It was between my daughters--I'm no good on dates.

JF: Now, did you have that surgery here in Tucson then?

DBU: At St. Mary's [Hospital]. See, I'm not a good patient.

JF: Not a patient patient?

DBU: The day we were having the surgery, and Dad came down to watch, he wanted to see it. The guy who did it was a guy named O'Hare, who was about six-five and 300 [pounds], just a bear of a man. And I'm laying in the waiting room, they're getting ready to knock me out, and he walks in. I always remember, he had a loud Hawaiian shirt on, and I go like this, when he comes over.

JF: This was the doctor, or your father?

DBU: The doctor. And I said, "I don't care, but my wife does, and before we start the surgery, I want to know what the limit of your malpractice policy is." He came unglued. He got mad and mad and mad, and finally I said, "You can't take a joke. Cool down." That surgery is the worst. Getting into the chest cavity, to me is the worst you can do.

JF: And it probably shook him up a bit, first. (laughs)

DBU: Well, that's where I'm going to. And he was madder than hell. You wake up.... They have to collapse the lung, so now they got tubes stuck in you to drain the lung, you're hooked up to all this stuff, you hurt like hell, and the first thing the nurse says is, "Cough." And you say, "No, I'm not gonna do this." And they explain to you what you're going to do. We had a friend who was a nurse and actually knew a lot about chests. You need the first three days, you need twenty-four-
hour-a-day nursing care. I mean, you've got to have a private nurse, and she set all that up. So we
did the surgery in the morning, I remember that, and the next day--they probably came in before,
but I don't remember it--the next day he came in, making his rounds, and he said, "How are you
doing?" And I said, "It's killing me. It just hurts like hell, and I've got a very high pain tolerance,
and I know that." And he said, "Well, after what you said in the surgery room to me, I haven't
given you any pain medication. I'll start it today." (laughter) I thought, "You son of a bitch!"

JF: A man with his own sense of humor, huh?

DBU: That's right. That was his way of getting even. That was his way of getting even.

JF: Boy! Let me ask you just a bit about Eloise.

DBU: Okay. We got off Eloise.

JF: Do you recall her as a child?

DBU: I remember more about her, probably, than the other ones, because she's closer to my age.
She and I fought like cats and dogs. We were the right age to do that. There's three or four stories I
tell about Eloise. I must have been five or six, and she's four years older than I am, and we were
down at the woodpile, fighting over who was going to chop the wood. She's stronger than I am.
She gets the axe up like this, and she whacks me on one foot, and I hop, and she whacks me on the
other foot.

JF: With the axe?!

DBU: With the axe. And I go running up to....