NPS-125
JAMES HILL
BIRTH DATE: DECEMBER 16, 1925
INTERVIEW DATE: OCTOBER 11, 1980
RUNNING TIME:
INTERVIEWER: PAUL O. WEINBAUM
RECORDING ENGINEER: UNKNOWN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: LIBERTY iSLAND, NY
TRANSCRIPT ORIGINALLY PREPARED BY: LINDA JANTZEN, DATE UNKNOWN
TRANSCRIPT RECONCEIVED BY: CHICK LEMONICK, 6/1996
TRANSCRIPT NOT REVIEWED

WEINBAUM: My name is Paul Weinbaum. I'm the curator at the Statue of Liberty National Monument. And today is October 11, 1980. I'm speaking with James Hill of Evelyn Hill Associates--

HILL: Incorporated.

WEINBAUM: Incorporated. Thank you, Jim. And you are the operator-owner.

HILL: Officer of Evelyn Hill, Incorporated, the concessionaire at the Statue of Liberty.

WEINBAUM: And have been so for many years, and have lived on, and worked on the Island for more years than anyone that has otherwise been associated

with it, to my knowledge.

HILL: And

WEINBAUM: Yes.

HILL: (Chuckle) That's terrible.

WEINBAUM: So that is the importance of this interview. We can begin by tracing the background to your being here.

HILL: Let me stop you. There's one fellow here that's worked here for a longer period of time than I have, and that's my associate manager, John Silvers, who had worked here since 1943 except for a year and half period when he went into the Korean War. And I started here on a steady basis in 1946, and have been here ever since. And worked one summer in 1942. During the war years, so it would have been 1942 for a summer. Then worked again starting in June or July of 1946 when I was discharged from the service.

WEINBAUM: And that's up years in a givernment document, which is one thing that I can't recall is when I was looking through the National Archives, that you were introduced as the young son of the owner of the concession.

HILL: Wipe the phrase young.

WEINBAUM: Yes. You apparently gave a very good impression. This was in 1947. But before that you lived on the Island.

HILL: Yes, I did. Was tapped on a start at the very beginning. I was born December 16, 1925. Was second child of two children. My sister was

born October 13th, 1923. We both lived at the Statue of Liberty, lived in a building that was a two-family building, on the front of the Statue of Liberty. Mt sister was born in the hospital in Manhattan, and I was born in that house, and apparently I was a little early and my mother was not able to get to a hospital. And I was delivered by a Major, I'll think of the name later, (?) no, can't think of the name.

WEINBAUM: Do you know whether you were the only person born on this Isalnd?

HILL: I was not.

WEINBAUM: You were not. You know the number of other people who were?

HILL: I met one, but through my mother and others, to my knowledge, I was the last one born here. I know there are others, and I would take a guess that during the time the Army was here there were probably five or six, which would have all been prior to 1925.

WEINBAUM: Do you know the names of any of these people?

HILL: None. No.

WEINBAUM: How did it come that you were born on this Island?

HILL: Well, other than what I just told you, the reason of the birth itself, my father was a career Army man, born and raised in Texas, Aaron Hill. Left home and served in the Mecican Border War. Then went into World War One. Remained in the service. Was in the occupation force in Germany, and then brought back to the States and transferred to Fort Wiood, which was

then an Army post. He was a medic. He met my mother, who emigrated from Poland in 1920. Lived in Baltimore. Through an Army buddy, had a blind date with my mother. They soon married. She moved from Baltimore to quarters on the Island. He was in the service whennhe was married. And when my sister was born, took his discharge around that time. After twenty-three before twenty-five, and went to work in the PX that served not only the Army's needs, but also served to the public, just food items. No souvenir or gift items. And still lived in the same quarters even though a civilian. Shared that house with Mr. Simpson, who your records will show was the superintendent at that time. Let's see, it's twenty-five, yes. At some point after twnty-five, before thirty-two, after twenty-seven, before thirty-two, the Army was told that they no longer could serve the public. A captain who lived at Fort Wood and worked at Fort Jay, Governor's Island, had a small stand on the pier. That pier was a covered pier on the front of the Statue of Liberty. And he had some souvenir items on this small stand. During that period the Army also frowned on this captain conducting this business, and it was suggested that he rid himself of it. At that point my father made an arrangement to buy those supplies that he had and to conduct that business, which was the same that he had, a small wooden stand, possibly six feet in length, just in fair weather, selling some gift items to the public. At some other time I'll have to put these dates together.

WEINBAUM: Now that wooden stand was located on the dock?

HILL: On the deck, a covered pier, partially covered at this point. A little story about that pier. That pier at one time, after twenty-five,

before thirty-two, and the reason I give these dates, those were the dates that I was born and then left again at eight years old. That pier was originally covered from the seawall to the face of the dock. It had a railroad running down it. It jutted out into a little house for a waiting room on the narrow side of the pier. On the face of the pier it had a little guard house. The huge shed was for freight and storage, and the public walked on the side of the shed and made use of that little waiting room. Towards the island side of the pier on that open side was this little stand that I just discussed. In that little waiting room, there was a boot black, Tony Mazella. He goes back as a boot black prior to 1925, and had four chairs. Most of his business was with the Army, and he also shined the shoes of the public. And he remained as a concessionaire, sub-concessionaire, throught the War Department, through the National Park Service, into the fifties. And he finally reduced himself to one chair, worked seven days a week, three hundred and sixty-five days a year, was legally blind, and suddenly retired and never heard from him again. To go back to the pier.

WEINBAUM: There was a second sub-concessionaire, was there not? A frankfurter man of sorts of some other sub-concessionaire during this early period.

HILL: Not that I know.

WEINBAUM: Okay.

HILL: There was a photographer.

WEINBAUM: Photographer, that is good. That's right.

HILL: Yes. The photographer was a Mr. Nils Petersen,

known as Pete, who had a studio in Hoboken, New Jersey. He goes back in my memory to the time I lived at the Statue. It was 1925 or after. And he invented a small box camera that looked like a tin type, but in truth was not, and he actually made negatives on paper, not the celluloid type of fabric. Would then take that paper out of the camera, with a small contraption in front of the lens. He would superimpose that on a negative of the Statue of Liberty, take a picture of it, again an actual photograph, develop it in this little box with his hypo and developer and water, and sell that as a souvenir item. He, too, worked under the War Department, and would just work in the summer. And, as I remember, he used to go to Florida in the winter and do similar on the beach and come back up in the summer. Then it grew in soze, continued with the same camera, the same setup, and did so right into the fifties. Then the Park Service decided that was a service they'd rather not have. And his subconcession was terminated. And Mr. Petersen passed away in the late fifties, early sixties, still conducting the studio in Hoboken. Then to go back to my father. Prior to, or around thirty-two or a few years later, the concession ceased to operate on the pier and operated in the Statue of LIberty itself, in the pedestal. Below, I believe, below the fourth landing. And it was in a corner of the pedestal, constructed of wood and in addition to selling gifts at that point, also sold an orange soda, and operated there for some years. And again later I should put this together with dates. He could have operated still there with Mr. Simpson, possibly not.

WEINBAUM: Is this the first time that food was sold to the public outside of the--

HILL: Outside of the PX?

WEINBAUM: Outside of the PX, thank you.

HILL: Right. Then--

WEINBAUM: Can we backtrack for one moment?

HILL: Yes.

WEINBAUM: Was your father the first concessionaire to the public at the Statue of Liberty? Do you remember which?

HILL: No. The captain that was in the Army was operating the stand before my father, was probably the first.

WEINBAUM: And do you know how long he had been at it?

HILL: The captain?

WEINBAUM: Had been the captain, had been there and operated it?

HILL: No, but I would say years. But not many years. Maybe two, maybe three.

WEINBAUM: So that to your knowledge, there were not any services to the public at Liberty Island or at Bedloe's Island, as it was then called until about 1920 or so?

HILL: Well, that would be before my birth, and I don't know. I would suspect that he came around the time I was born or maybe a year later. That would have those couple of years while my father was working in the PX, the captain was operating on the pier. And then in probably twenty-nine

or so was the time that my father took over his operation. From coversations, I remember that they felt the captain took advantage of them in selling those goods to him because my father had to borrow money from his mother still living in Texas on a farm, in order to consumate that deal. But it proved worthwhile to him and the family.

WEINBAUM: He was a captain in the Army at the time, or he was retired?

HILL: My father, you're not talking about my father? You're talking

WEINBAUM: No.

HILL: Yes, he was an active captain in the Army at the time.

WEINBAUM: Selling concession items to the public?

HILL: Gift items to the public.

WEINBAUM: Gift items. Very interesting arrangement.

HILL: Yes. And this was frowned upon by the service and he was forced to get out of that business and that led to that opportunity for my father to take that over, being a civilian working for the PX. And also the PX being forbidden to sell to the public. After, when the Park Service decided the concession should not be in the Statue itself, arrangements were made to take over the home in which I lived. And there were, as I said before, two aprtments in that one building. These were broken through at my father's expense and the indoor part was turned into a souvenir counter, and there was an outdoor counter that sold some food items,

sandwiches, hot dogs, and beverages.

WEINBAUM: Now at that point, you moved off the Island to someplace in

HILL: Yes, and I am confused now because that building was only about thirty feet from the base of the Statue. And in between that building and the Statue was a comfort station. Between that building and the pier at one time was a wooden shed that did indeed sell beverages. And I'll be darned if I know who sold them because at that time my father was not operating the concession, I still lived here, and someone was. Possibly it was also that same captain, but that shed was torn down at the time my father operated in the Statue. So there were no facilities on the ground level.

WEINBAUM: For clarification, the National Park Service took over the Statue of Liberty National Monument, took over the administration of the Statue of Liberty in 1933.

HILL: Did they have personnel there?

WEINBAUM: They had personnel. They were confined to the area that surrounded the Statue of Liberty, the immediate surroundings. The dock we are talking about is in the general area of what we call the current work dock.

HILL: Right.

WEINBAUM: So we're not talking about a different dock. Fort Wood continued to operate at Beloe's Island until 1937 when the whole of Beloe's Island became, came under the administration of the Statue of Liberty.

HILL: All right. Now when the Park Service came here in thirty-three?

WEINBAUM: Thirty-three?

HILL: They operated out of a building behind our home, our concession. That was the building that contained the PX. And in the basement a bowling alley. And they operated out of there temporarily.

WEINBAUM: How much time did you spend on the island from the time that you moved off of it to the war years? Did you spend much time here?

HILL: No, I didn't. No, that was thirty-two that we moved out into the Bronx. No, we didn't. That summer we moved off, we rentred an apartment in Coney Island. We spent the summer in Coney Island and that September moved to an apartment in the Bronx.

WEINBAUM: Can you give me some of your impressions of what it was like for the tourist visiting the Island in the early thirties just before the National Park Service came?

HILL: All right, I can. And I guess I should go into my youth, too, at that period because as children our life was spent behind the Statue of Liberty, that portion of the Island that was Fort Wood. My friends were all children of Army personnel. There was a barracks, homes, officers' quarters, signal station, mess hall and on and on. And a huge baseball field. That was important to the question you just asked me veacuse the tourists had a great seat to watch this baseball game from the star fort and from the balconey because the first base line was only feet away from the star fort on the rear of

the Statue. And interestingly enough, the Fort Wood baseball team was usually a championship ball team. There was a captain here who, if I remember right, played semi-pro ball at one time. And he would arrange transfers for baseball players to be stationed at Fort Wood. And these were played, as I remember, on Sundays. And the tourists besided seeing the Statue of Liberty and tons of boats out in the harbor in those days and also great baseball games immediately in the rear of the Statue. To get back to the baseball, which was an important event during our summers, and I can remember being treated by allowing to go with the baseball team when they played in Yankee Stadium on a championship game always against other Army teams from other camps. To get back to your question, the tourists rarely that I could remember could ever get behind the Statue of Liberty on the ground. There are as many as three boats running to the Statue of Liberty, as little as one, during those years.

WEINBAUM: A day?

HILL: A day. I can't temember the capacities, but probably never more than four or five hundred. Riding the boats when I lived here wasd always a treat, too, because there is cooks on board the boats to feed the crew, and as little treats they used to feed us, too. I can't tell you how many kids that lived on the Island, but between the ages of six and eight when I attended school in Governor's Island the trip that took us to school I can remember at least fifteen or twent or thirty kids that went to school. And that trip would stop at Governor's Island on its way to the Battery. Then when school was out, it went from the Battery to Governor's Island to the Statue of Liberty to take care of the school

kids.

WEINBAUM: Were these children of officers?

HILL: Officers and enlisted men. The school was a New York City school. It was PS-3 Annex. It was three school rooms, one room just for kindergarten. The second room was from the first grade to fourth or fifth, and the third room was sixth and up. I suspect just to the eiugth grade. The row in your school room designated the class you're in with one teacher in the classroom teaching as many as four grades.

WEINBAUM: Where was the school located?

HILL: The pier that our boat landed on was very close to Castle William that took a boat and not a ferry. The school was between Castle William and the officers' quarters on the other side of the island. It would be hard for me now to pinpoint the school, but the wooden building was closer to Buttermilk Channel than it was to the bay.

WEINBAUM: Was there a fence that separated the fort, Fort Wood, from the Statue itself? Is there a fence or a wall or anything that separated the Army people?

HILL: Well, on the north side of the island it was on different levels. From the pier to the concession home that I discussed was a flight of cement steps. That compelled you to stay on the fron of the Statue. Just to the right of the pier was a path that would allow you to the other end of the island. And it was closed, and I can't remember if it was a dairy or was just naturally closed because of the steps in front of the pier that took the people to the front of the Statue. So I don't think there was any

barrier. On the other side of the island I can't recall a barrier, but again there was only a path and that end of the island was the building, the first building that the tourists might go into as the infirmary. And that in itself with the path would have probably stopped them from getting to the back of the island.

WEINBAUM: Did you have any sense at the time that you were living here, of living on an island with a great national monument?

HILL: Not really. I probably thought that everyone lived on an island with a big structure of some sort sitting there because my eight years revolved around living on an island with school and a home both being on an island. So, no. Of course, I was aware of the Statue of Liberty, but it came with the territory. It came with the house. So did the fort and so did the tourists and so did Army personnel.

WEINBAUM: Did you like climbing the steps to the crown?

HILL: We did that frequently. Probably because we were not permitted to do so. And this was one of the little places of forbidden fruit to run up to the crown and run back down without being caught.

WEINBAUM: Did you ever go into the torch?

HILL: Yers, I did. Then again Mr. Simpson who was very friendly to me, my sister and my parents on occasions would take me up there. And as the years, I used to go up thre many times with him. As a matter of note, I think now, our services living here were throough the Army, even though we were civilians at that time. The ice was delivered by a man by the name of Bruce who was

in the Army, but performed that service of delivering ice to all the homes. Milk was delivered. Other provisions were bought in the PX. And I know my mother occasionallywent to Governor's Island and the city because the Battery at that time was teeming with all kinds of little stores that provisioned home owners and residents because, I guess not more than two blocks from the Battery were lots of homes or apartments, small apartments.

WEINBAUM: It was a (?) community down there.

HILL: I didn't know that.

WEINBAUM: The You shared a house with the first superintendent, a man by the name of Simpson, who served as a transition between the Army and the Park Service. And you mentioned him taking you up to the crown. How did that work out? And how did you divide a house?

HILL: Well Let me try and give you an idea. We

(END OF SIDE ONE)

(BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO)

WEINBAUM: Today is December 28, 1980, and I am continuing my interview with James Hill. This is Paul Weinbaum speaking. Jim can we resume with the question that we stopped with on the other side of the tape, and that was how you shared your house with Mr. Simpson.

HILL: All right. The house was probably fifty feet north of thre steps I described previously. It was a rectanglear house, probably measuring sixty feet by twenty feet. All right? Divided, which would make two apartments thirty feet by

twenty feet. Two separate entrances on the north end of the house. Yes. Ours was on the side of the house facing Battery Park. The houses were identical. The apartments were identical. Our apartment, when you walked in that door, was living room. Directly behind the living room was my parents' bedroom. That took care of the twenty-foot length. Then one bath, and from the bath. again returning to the front of the house, was the kitchen which was a little bigger than our living room. The kitchen contained the coal stove. Coal was delivered by the Army to a bin outside of the house for our resident and Mr. Simpson. Mr. and Mrs. Simpsonresiding in that house next to ours housed just the two of them, their children being grown and living elsewhere. Next between, right behind our house, behind meaning towards New Jersey, was the PX. And I think I mentioned it on the previous tape, it also had a recreation center for the soldiers, having a two-alley bowling center in the basement, the upstairs containing the PX, and another room besides an office. And I can't recall that other room, other than possibly some tables and chairs for card playing and eating and etccetera. To delve further if you want in the living conditions there, on the seawall the next building you would have come to was the apartment house. Between the apartment house and the Sttaue of Liberty was a building and a cage filled with guinea pigs. Those guinea pigs used by the infirmary for medical reasons. And the guinea pigs being great pets to us kids.

WEINBAUM: How karge was the cage?

HILL: It would be three foot wide and running at least ten feet.

WEINBAUM: Now I'm looking at a photograph of the Island as

it was in, well, Ji,, can you date this photograph?

HILL: This is comparitively new because the apartment house is gone. Much of the renovation was done. The administration and the concession building was built, so it had to be prior to forty-nine and after thirty-nine.

WEINBAUM: Right. How the two buildings that you're , the building that you lived in is the building that is right near the dock.

HILL: Right. Just about fifty feet beyond the steps.

WEINBAUM: And the building that is behind that ans still-- the first building that's visible is

HILL: Was the first row of family quarters after the apartmenthouse, and these were for the officers and their family. And it was a row of three or four houses, some double occupancy.

WEINBAUM: The records show that you got along very well with the Simpsons, and also that the quarters were relatively tight. And looking at the photograph, I can see what they mean by very small quarters. It does seem sort of tight, if you will.

HILL: So tight that the photograph doesn't show it because it's on the north side of the building, but there was a little porch, a screened-in porch, that my father enclose, and that became my sister's bedroom because at that point my sister had to have between the ages of eight and eleven. I slept on the couch in the living room, and my sister got her own room. It could not have been more than six foot by six foot.

WEINBAUM: Do you remember while you were living here and, of course, you moved off the island when you were eight, the telephone service or the other utilities? Was there any problem with them? I know the telephone service at that time was for New Jersey.

HILL: Well. In our case there was no problem at all because we didn't have a telephone. And I can't recall now how my parents could use a phone if they wished. I do know they had a telephone on the dock. Probably one in the PX. I know that the Army owned the telephone company. I know this because the telephone problem much later on in the forties or fifties, when the Park Service wanted work done, they discovered they didn't own the cable nor did the telephone company.

WEIMBAUM: Now that is a very interesting story, at least for me. And that was in 1940's. Do you remember enough of the details to relate it?

HILL: One details I remember, I became frightened to death because it looked like somebody was going to have to pick up the tab for that cable or reimburse the telephone company because their records indicated that they were paying a rent to the Army for the use of that cable for a couple of decades at that point. And if they wanted to reimburse, be reimbursed for that fee, I'm sure we would have given up our telephone. However, they did not and they did indeed replace the cable, and since replaced it again not too long ago.

WEIMBAUM: Essentially this material is in the records of the National Archives and the correspondence is quite detailed on the telephone situation. And the reason for the problem was that Army, because it was the Army had no Problem. When the

Park Service took over as a civilian agency, it ran into the problem of who owned the cable. But it's interesting to find that you come from it from a different perspective.

HILL: This photograph we're looking at will also show the radio towers so communication was not only telephone, but they also had radio.

WEIMBAUM: So it means that you unable to call friends that you may have had who did not live on the Island.

HILL: No. NO. We could not, nor, now that I remember, did any of my friends have phones in their house, which leads me to believe that maybe there weren't any phones at all in the quarters. To think back, a close friend lived in the apartment house, so I'll assume there were no phones in the apartment house. Another friend lived behind the tennis court on the extreme northwest side of the Island. Also that was a brick house shared by, with another family. They didn't have a telephone. So I would assume prior to thirty-three that there were no phones in the quarters.

WEIMBAUM: How many alleys were there to bowl with, to bowl on?

HILL: I think two. And as kids we were not permitted in the alley, nor were we permitted to be pinsetters because some of the soldiers picked up some extra money by being pinsetters. So that was off limits to us kids as was many areas. In fact, I think on the last recording session we thought we were recording and we were not another area that we were not permitted in was in the warehouse which was next to the west pier. Fact there were two warehouse there. We called them warehouses, but one was also used for target shooting where the soldiers sometimes

fired their forty-five automatics. We know that because occasionally we'd go in there and dig their bullets out of the sand bags and also the wooden barrier behind the sand bags. Part of it was a stable for the mules. And as kids we also witnessed them slaughtering the mules when for reasons I don't remember, they didn't need them anymore.

WEIMBAUM: Can we clarify which is the west dock at this time?

HILL: That would be the one almost close to the location of the visitors pier today. That end of the island. And what I recall is that I wasn't a discipline problem, but I got into fair amount of trouble. And either the year or the second year after I moved off the island, which had to be thirty-three, thirty-four, maybe thirty-five, that one of the warehouse burned down. And this made the newspapers and my parents sent me a copy of one of the newspapers showing a picture of the fireboats trying to put out the fire. And I recall reading the names of a couple of my friends trying to put out the fire. And I recall reading the names of couple of my friends who were suspected of putting the warehouse on fire, accidentally I'm sure, from shooting off fireworks because it happened over the Fourth of July, that summer I was no longer living on the island and I was something I was not involved in and probably would have, had I been on the island at that time. But that was all the warehouse that had the stable and the firing range.

WEIMBAUM: How many mules were there on the island, and what was their function?

HILL: Well, from the west pier to the east pier there

was a railroad track that ran along the edge of the island facing New York. That was the years to, there was a little flat car and that was used to transport goods and materials from one end of island to the other. And those mules pulled that flat car running on the tracks. I don't know why they dispensed with that at that flat car with goods. Maybe manpower replaced horsepower, I don't know.

WEIMBAUM: Do you have any idea how many children there were on the island at the time?

HILL: Well, no. It seemed to be teaming with kids, but I know the school boat, I would think about twenty kids. And that had to be, of course, school age. Some of the older kids went to school in New York, probably didn't ride the same boat that we did. So that would be a few more. And, of course, there were some kids under age. So if I said thirty, forty kids, that would be from carriage to teenage was probably close to the population of the number of children.

WEIMBAUM: Would you have any idea from other information, how many people were living on the post at the time?

HILL: No, no, I wouldn't. But if we counted houses, barracks, and the apartment house, we could probably come pretty close to a number, which I can't do while the tape is running.

WEIMBAUM: Right. Well, we can do that later.

HILL: Yes, but I could take a guess at it later.

WEIMBAUM: Describe to me that apartment house, just the size of it and kind of problems that were in it.

HILL: I wish I had the photograph in front of me, which we have, I know you have one. But it was two stories. The entrances most used were facing the Statue. It was brick. I would guess there were five to six entrances, so I would guess ten families, ten to twelve families, living in it. Now they were families and they were small apartments. The two friends that I had there that I can think of, one was named Woodburn, whose father was a captain, so I don't know that was restricted to officers or not. Probably. Now, in the barracks there were just soldiers. If they has dependents, I would think they would have either have had to live in that apartment house or those other homes. And I don't remember whether enlisted men lived in there or not.

WEIMBAUM: Did you have friends who lived in Manhattan or in Governor's Island or outside of Liberty Island.

HILL: I did have some friends in Governor's island because my world revolved around the two islands. And they were school chums who I didn't see except during school hours. But most of my friends, and after all I went to school from kindergarten into the third grade, were kids that lived on Bedloe's Island and also attended the same school. My closest friend was a Grogan who lived in one of the homes that we can see in this photograph now. And his father was a Colonel Grogan who interestingly enough was the head of the army force that just prior to the outbreak of World War Two was with the group of troops that went into, I think, Venezuela to protect the, that was either mined or coming out of there because I guess our great need for aluminum at that time, which is an interesting observation at this time and age that we sent troops to South America.

WEIMBAUM: In 1933-34 we were at the depth of the Depression. Living on Liberty Island at that time, do you know, can you remember whether or not you remembered or were aware of a Depression going on?

HILL: Not at all. My father at that time worked in the PX on a government salary. Sure, their money didn't go as far, but before, during and after I thought we were probably as rich as anyone because we always seemed to have everything we need. And as much an anyone else and as little as anyone else that lived on the island. I never did see a time when I lived on the Island the kids had more or less than I did. There were no bicycles. Occasionally there was a roller skate or two. And the equipment, the games, sports, I guess we just all seemed to have a mitt or a bat or the likes. But now, never realized there was a Depression.

WEIMBAUM: Was there a large turnover in your friends that would have indicated a large turnover of Army personnel on the island?

HILL: No, there wasn't. Army personnel came and went mostly in the form of single enlisted men. The others on the Island seemed like a pretty permanent staff that I could recall. But my recollection is only a few short years that I became friendly with friends outside of my own home, which would probably have been the age from five to eight. So we're only talking about three or four.

WEIMBAUM: Did you do things while you were living on the island such as go to a baseball game, Yankee Stadium?

HILL: Of Dealing with baseball at Fort Wood. This is

very vivid in my recollection because baseball was a big event. I think this was covered previously and, if not, I'll do this later. If so fine. But what you are asking me is whether I had a social life outside of the Island such as going to games, baseball etcetera. No. My only life off the Island was an occasional movie. There was a movie theater right across the street from City hall. My parents or parent would take me to an occasional movie Saturdays. In fact, it was the City Hall Theater. I'd see movies there. Other than that, I had a little or no life off the Island nor did my parents because their friends were those people living on the Island. And their social life revolved around those people. Occasionally in the evening they did go to town and why I remember that is usually my babysitter would be some burly soldier who would sleep on the floor of living room and most times keep me up with his snoring. Those are the only occasions that I remember my parents having a life off the Island.

WEIMBAUM: Before we leave the period of your youth while you still lived on the Island, I would like to ask two questions? One, did you ever get to climb to the torch itself?

HILL: Yes, I did. I think we covered that when Mr. Simpson would take me up there on occasions in maintaining the lights in the torch. And was a big treat for me to accompany him, not only to go the torch, but to be the helper of Mr. Simpson. That was a privilege.

WEIMBAUM: Was the general public ever allowed to go to the torch or anybody that was not Army personnel ever allowed to go into the torch as far as you remember from the early period?

HILL: No. In my time I can safely say the torch was never open to visitors. In my time that was still locked. A little differently than it is now. But a cage kind of barrier with to go up the ladder in the torch.

WEIMBAUM: You say the barrier was different.

HILL: A little different, but a little different in its opening. But, yes, a fence, chain-fence type of door arrangement.

WEIMBAUM: Do you remember, well, let me start over. There have been a number of people who have come to us and say that they did indeed go to the torch and have suggested that this was during the period of New York World's fair of 1939-1840. Now, of course, you had moved off the Island at that time, but any period the torch might have been open for that reason?

HILL: I'd say no.

WEIMBAUM: You have no recollection?

HILL: None. None at all. In fact, not having a recollection, I also have a recollection of what things that were going on on the island all during that period. After leaving the Island and at no time do I remember anyone ever having gone up there, a visitor.

WEIMBAUM: Right. Do you remember when you were young and still living on the Island and you were about six years old any work being done on the torch, any repair work on the torch at all?

HILL: Not when I lived here because that was thirty-three, but yes, I remember the summer that work was being done on the diadem. Is that how you

pronounce it?

WEIMBAUM: I believe so.

HILL: Diadem?

WEIMBAUM: Yes.

HILL: when they removed the copper sheeting and I think replaced some of the steel member. I remember that because for a good period of time and I think mostly that whole summer, the Statue was closed a good part of it. And this was a hardship for my parents because their total income came from the sales in the Statue.

WEIMBAUM: The Statue at this time was closed for about twenty months all together and there was an effort to open it for the World's Fair. The reason I asked you the earlier question was that torch was repaired in the early 1930s and there was study done by the Army on the conditions of stress and I was wondering whether or not you were familiar with any work that might have been done.

HILL: I don't recall. Did they do any major work there?

WEIMBAUM: I'm not an engineer. I can't answer that question. Well, I would like to leave, to ask you whether you have any other special recollections, yes.

HILL: I would say to the work that could have been done on the torch then. I'm only thinking of what happened. I don't remember any exposed part of torch, and I think I would have, during the time I lived there. So if there was work other than the studies, I would guess it was internal

and not external.

WEIMBAUM: It would have been internal work, yes. The, do you remember anything that we have not covered either in this interview or in our earlier interview that you'd like to say about this earlier period while you still in the Island?

HILL: Not off hand. I think I'd have to listen to the whole tape.

WEIMBAUM: Okay. Why don't we move on.

HILL: All right.

WEIMBAUM: And have you very briefly tell us your relationship to Liberty Island between 1933-34 and the time that you returned to work here which was in the late 1940's.

HILL: True.

WEIMBAUM: Just give us a brief outline of the frequency of contact and what you relationship was.

HILL: In relation to the Statue of Liberty.

WEIMBAUM: Yes.

HILL: Everything soon after leaving here started to disappear for me, any relation to the Statue of Liberty, because everything that I dealt with at Bedloe's Island at that time also left. Because the soldiers, the families, all started to disperse. So my contact in going back to the Statue of Liberty after leaving was just through my parents and through my parent's business at the Statue. Because none of my friends were there. In fact no one was there. Ah, that would take me into. ...

(END OF TAPE)