

Raymond Pearson with Florence Kaplan

Saturday, April 6, 1974

R:

We're in the eighth floor workrooms, and I am speaking with Miss Florence Kaplan, who for many, many years worked at Bergdorf Goodman, and I have asked her to say some words, primarily what ~~Bergdorf's~~ was like when ~~she~~ ^{on} ~~N~~ ~~her~~ you first came here to work--what you remember about your job, the atmosphere.

F: I didn't come here; I came when we were ~~still~~ still down on 616

5th Avenue. R: That's what I mean. F: It was a completely different thing. It was a beautiful, private dressmaking establishment. I believe there were ~~four~~ ^{wee} floors, which ~~was~~ offices, and partly stock room. I was there about . When did they come up here? R: 1928.

F: 1928. I was then 26 years of age when we moved up here, and immediately the business became fabulous. R: Yes. It mushroomed, I guess. F: It mushroomed so that everyone was surprised beyond all expectations. For many years I worked ~~in the~~, with the embroideries, which in those years was a great art of the haute couture. R: Which floor was it on at that time? Do you remember? F: I think we were on the Fifth Floor. I also at that time was helping in the purchase of accessories, such as the designers used only, the rhinestone clips, the buckles, the belts, the magnificent flowers.

R: *For the milliners?*

F: No, only for the dressmakers. We had a very small millinery department then (R: At the ~~very~~ very beginning), at the beginning, yes. But Feathers and flowers were part of the high fashion scene. There was a Mrs. Mary Gleason, who ~~designed~~ magnificent at-home and tea gowns using tons of ostrich fringe. Beautiful flowers that were made by William Warner & Co. and that time, who imported the most beautiful silk. Oh, there was nothing else but silk, let us say, as ...

With fabrics as they were, not as chemistry tanks. R: Could you describe some of the fabrics that you remember? F: Well, Fabrics came under ~~three~~ ^{FOUR} headings, silk, cotton, wool and linens (~~four~~) no rayons, no polyesters, no chemical tanks. Fabrics had a definite personality of their own. One could do things with chiffon that one could not do with crepe de chine[?]. Wools were pure wools. I had never known that there was such a thing as wool that was not wool, per se. In later years we began to add a little, with a _____, what was it nylon, we began to put in a little nylon, ~~Forstmann's~~ ^{have} woollen added....

R: Mr. Summer mentioned about that, I remember it very well, I had a tape of him and he mentioned that. F: And we asked why. The answer was that they found that it was stronger or it had become a new password and one was keeping up with the times. The beautiful fabrics were the *** I would say. First come the fabrics ~~and~~ then comes the design. Because my earliest impressions of working, once I went to work in the fabric dept. ^{with} Mr. Summer, was the appointment made twice a year to show the various lines, ~~Bianchi, Fuchter, Ferrier, Forstmann's~~ Woolens, Bennet's? Woolens. R: Was Steron? F: Steron was then the high silk house. R: ^{? Styron?} in business then? F: Bianchi had for many years been one of the leaders in the field.

1 Codulia, Fuchter and Desher? R: Oh, I don't remember them. F: That's way back. R: Well, I want 'em way, way back. F: Appointments were made and the designers, Miss ~~Frankie~~, ^{FRANCO}, Mr. Goodman would sit in at a big round table and decide on fabrics. Bernard Newman would pick what he wants, Lelis Morris would pick her fabrics. With the eye that the fabric opened the mind for what they could use it for potentially. But one of our big problems was at the end of the season when we had bought 40 yards of an expensive, expensive fabric and the designer's decided that they couldn't do a thing with it. Hoping that next season, well....but fabrics themselves could be beautifully printed. I personally, still cannot accept blue jeans as a way of... R: Being attired? F: Being dressed; that was all right for my ~~comm.~~ ^{conn.} days on the farm, one was wearing someone else's old overalls, one did not feel dressed. Suede and leather ~~were~~ definitely things that one wore only in the country, for the city there were beautiful furs, beautiful woolens, if nothing else magnificent woolens... R: and linens for.... F: Linens for the summer R: Exclusively? or was it a great prevalent fabric to use for summer for many outfits or was it only very special?

F: I don't really.... R: In other words for day dresses, daytime, the walking F: I do remember that every Spring that there was at least one blue linen outfit that was part of the collection, blue linen with magnificent white touches in the way of embroidered collars, ~~jabots~~ and things of that sort. That was for early Spring. R: I wanted to ask you one question about 616 ^Fifth Avenue. Do you remember what the first floor looked like when you walked into it? F: Yes, R: That's very important to me. F: Yes, 616 Fifth Avenue was what was known in those years as a one window showroom, a long narrow room, carpeted in a pale grey. Entrance window for a good time was an open window, in the years of the Spanish shawl craze two chairs were ^{usually} ~~beautifully~~ draped with ~~two~~ ^{of} the most magnificent drapes

^{usually}

of the Spanish shawls that were procurable. Each one a work of art and really should belong in a museum. R: Oh, I see, now was this two chairs with a shawl on each and a mannequin? F: No, no, I don't remember mannequins in the windows at all. R: Well, the reason I asked you was Bernard Newman started in the window dressing and I believe he innovated small spotlights and one mannequin per window and they only had one window. F: But at the time of the Spanish shawl craze I do remember that we had a magnificent chest in the window at one time with the shawl draped out of it, like a treasure chest and each one of these shawls were a work of art in themselves. and women wore them, they were used as evening...
Was? itself?

R: Was this during the thirties? F: The very early thirties. R: Now was there a foyer between the window and the main part of the first floor that was blackened by tile. F: That was the entrance hall as you came, The foyer as you came in the door. R: The door was on the side of the window? F: Yes, sure. R: So you went in and here was the black and white tile on the floor. F: and beyond that was this pale grey, ~~but~~? I can't remember any larger things. You walk towards a small elevator, which could accomodate four people I would imagine and ~~XXXXXX~~ along side of that was a showcase , one long showcase, with inside illumination in which there were a few accessories, Spanish fans which were popular, some small ~~knicknacks~~. We had no glove department at that time. R: How very interesting. That's very important. F: We had not stockings, we had no gloves. R: Small handbags. F: That was it , handbags, vanity cases, a few of those. I am trying to think of the woman that ran that department. R: Not Mrs. Miller? F: No, long before. Mae Miller came up into this building, Long before then. R: Well, I don't think I know then. F: She was a French woman with a great deal of charm and verve. R: I will see if I can trace that then and what you've said. F: All right, and towards the back there were rows of what was the first beginning of ready-to-wear coats. R: Was this beyond the elevator area? F: Beyond the elevator going to the back. The building was a narrow but very deep building. Beyond that was the workroom with a young man. It was just started about two or three years after I had been there. What was his name? A brilliant young man who had come out of the.....School of design (Trappagen?) and he was given room in which to design clothes. His aunt was a poor woman and was the fitter for him. R: Was his name Dean? F: No, Dean came in this building. What was his name? a lovely young man and very talented. I was the shopper. At that time I was the shopper. Various people would tell me what they wanted or needed. Would give me pieces of material to match up the linings or ~~clip~~ or ribbon and I went through...R: or braid F: a braid, I knew all the sources of supply and would go out to buy for them. What's his name? He said to me once, You're smart, get me an inspiration. I went down to 38th street. Between fifth and sixth avenue there was a street level store of a lace importer, McGinnis and Thomas, who brought in the finest French laces and embroideries. When I got in, there was no reason, I was doing other things in the area, They were opening a case and there was the most beautiful bronze, pure bronze lace,

a ~~mark~~ metal lace of two widths, one I believe was either ^a 24-inch flounce and then a straight band of about 12 or 14 inches that matched. A set. At that time we had a ~~mark~~ beautiful red-headed model, I believe her name was _____, I looked at that lace and said oh, I ~~said~~ of course, Mr. McGinnis, Mr. Thomas every one knew me, I was with ~~B~~ Bergdorf's. I said, Do you know what I want? I want a piece of this right away, a memorandum. I think I have, they haven't even opened the case, I said I'm going right back and give it to him. They loaned me ~~two~~ pieces of what was then known as memorandums, I marched out, I don't quite remember what the terrific price of those years were, it must have cost all of, maybe, ~~of~~ 6 or 7 dollars a yard for the wide ^{widtH} length and a little bit less ~~of or~~ ^{FOR} the narrow one. and this young man looked at it and ~~said~~ what am I going to do with that? I haven't the faintest idea. I just saw them opening the case, leave it we can keep it for four days, our memorandums were always good for four days. From Monday through Friday.

R: Monday through Thursday. F: Monday through Thursday but you had to return them on Friday of the same week. Er, He began to drink, the next day he pinned up, O I don't think it was _____, that model at the time, I believe ~~she~~ was a Christian Scientist. She had tried to interest me in Christian Science. He pinned up a dress on her that was ~~absolte~~ ^{Absolutely} breathtaking and she walked into the showroom with it just pinned, no one had put a stitch in it, so a woman saw it and immediately wanted a copy. R: Where was the showroom by the way. Which floor. F: Upstairs. One flight up. She took the elevator up ~~one~~ flight. That was our whole showroom, we had one showroom on the second floor. Everything was shown on that floor. Furs, dresses, suits, coats...R: And whatever hats there were. There must have been some. F: I don't remember hats at all. R: Because Mrs. Brandeis did, O I'm sorry this was the other building. She was bringing hats from the 45th street location to show to customers, she didn't have a regular place there. F: I don't remember hats there. R: There were but she brought them up herself. F: And took them home. R: That's exactly right she took them back to where she made them. F: I never remember seeing hats there. R: That's exactly right. F: But this dress I think they took 3 orders on that one day. He never let that girl take the dress off, and she kept saying but I'm being scratched, I hurt, I ache, I can't sit down in this and he said wait, wait, wait. I couldn't forget her. and that was the ~~way~~ things were done. I can't remember that young man's ^{name} ~~anem~~ for the ^{2nd flr} ~~Show room~~ life of me. I think maybe he went afterwards. But that ^A wasn't to last for too, too long. We needed the space. I believe it was in those years that Mr. Goodman was beginning to make ready-to-wear coats in conjunction with some of the 7th Ave. manufacturers. They would manufacture exclusive coats for us out of materials that Mr. Goodman bought and it became quite successful. R: Yes, it was the mid or latter part of the 20's that he started to innovate his ready-to-wear. F: One name I remember very, very carefully, ^{that} was Abe Bellar and Sons. The man who became our production manager Mr. Max Cohn? was working for Bellar in those years when I first went up there to get buttons that had been ~~lost~~ off coats or a scrap of material that was used to face back a coat...R: Did you deal with Mr. Max when you went there? F: Yes, he had the ... he was in charge of all their fabrics at that time. R: O, he was in charge of fabrics?

F: In Abe Bellar. R: O yes, I realize the difference, yes. F: None of the house was that good then. R: . They were just sort of beginning F; All of them ,. but the ready-to-wear department in coats that Mr. Goodman started took hold. and I think from there on they went to a modified form of ready to wear dresses. R: Let me understand, that's when dresses were very, very much important... F: And all this was always done. You stitched with pure thread. No nylons, no acetate no bothing. Your fabrics were either , as I said, pure wool, they were lined, the coats were lined with ^{wool} ~~pure~~ interlining. There was nothing else. R: Lamb's wool? F: Lamb's wool, of course. R: We still use that for our coats too. F: Lamb's wool interlinings, pure silk linings. There was a phase in which our fur departments and our coats one of the high points of style , the nap on the outside, one of our tremendous monograms, that were a work of art in themselves. R: I wish I had some of those monograms. F: O I can't think....I used to have all these charts and things because a dozen times a day Mr. Goodman or Mr. Singer would send for me. Send Florence in with the charts and look at them, ~~look~~ that. All right, go upstairs and find out what this does, put no. 38. R: Where was the fabric department in that building? Which floor? F: at 616? Mr. Rosenbaum had the fabric department on the back of the third floor? Third floor was the offices. He had back of the third floor. The fourth floor was all the tailors and the fifth floor.....? so he ^{had} half of the third floor or was it the otherway round? No the dressmakers were on the top floor, all the dressmakers were on the top floor. All the tailors were on the floor below. Mr. Louie, Mr. R: Yes, now I would like, could you tell me something about Mr. Louie? I have very, very little on him at all. I have not too much description of him really. I know what he looks like. I have seen one picture of him and that's all. He is very austere, seems very unapproachable and yet I don't think he was er, he just seemed menacing. Because of his bearing. F: He was a marvelous tailor. R: O I,,,,,,,legend. F: He did a lot of his own designing of coats every year. The men he worked with fought him, battled with him but not a one was ever a quitter. Remember the two brothers, the Gile brothers, they were Italian brothers. Louis....er.....wasseen..... a vital thing in.....garments. Pin it up with two pins. Take in here, take it in here, it doesn't swing right. R: In other words he could grab the whole essence in one very simple stroke like an artist would do with one stroke of the pen or the brush and that expresses everything. F: A few pins and they'd say it can't be done. Try. Try. Of course he had a tremendous following, tremendous following, you know one of my , coming up to this building, one of my early impressions of this building was Mr. Goodman who had that kind of an eye too you know. Because when we came up here I was then doing completely different work. I was up on the 8th floor. with tailors. with wall-to-wall, north and south wall-to-wall and westward with tailors. In later years they took them downstairs, part of them and put in milliners, but in the beginning we only had the one building you see. This whole thing was tailors right up. My desk was right here. R: Did it go over to the elevators. F: Yes, it was an L. An L-shaped building. This was

only 2 elevators. Of course they put in that other one ~~in~~....last year? But there were 2 elevators. But many a time Mr. Goodman would come up from a fitting, from tailoring fittings, where he watched Louis or Gaston or Costanza and he would come up and look around the rooms and have a coat on his arms and say ~~whose~~ ^{Who's} working on Mrs. O'dell's coat? ~~whose~~ working on this coat. And he would hold it up and he would walk over to a tailor and he would say ~~O~~ Mr. Goodman, Me , Me,Me ,. What's the matter with my coat? And he'd said nothing's the matter, my..... ~~ad~~ he would look around and the men around the chair they'd move away and he'd shove some things off the table and sit down, cross his legs, just like a tailor does, sitting on the table and he'd say ~~Who's~~ working? come here, come here, look, now if you take this. There is something here that isn't acting right. Turn this thing out and maybe try to deepen this dart a little but he said , you understand sir it ~~s~~ings away and I don't want it to swing away. And in two words like that the man would....oh, the man would begin to his face, on the figure ~~it~~ didn't do that and he would say yes, well, the figure stands still but this woman R: Moves/ F: Moves, give her this. and in two words like that. He used to be marvelous to watch. R: I would like if you could, can you remember one instance where you might have seen Miss Leslie and Mr. Goodman together discussing something? She's very ~~I'm~~ trying to put together a composite history of Miss Leslie because she's very very important to this collection. I've just recently been given a beautiful photograph of her, I've ~~asked~~ different people about her and I would like all of your opinions of her that I could have. F: Well, Leslie basically ~~XXXXXX~~ of course was a very creative person, she was a great designer, a very creative person and a very shy person. R: Yes, that I guessed, that's very evident F: very shy peson. R: Do you remember a particular instance that you can recall that had to do with Leslie, maybe that's the easiest....F: Well, many a time when I would be in her designing room, waiting for her to choose something or make a decision about something, Mr. Goodman would knock and walk in and he would look at the model and he would say turn around. and he would say well, well, well. Leslie would sort of back away ~~and~~ into the furtherest corner and say Thank you. R: That's ? very good, That's very good. F: Because he, you know, Mr. Goodman was a man of very few words. R: Yes I gathered that. F: Definite opinions and very few words. and if he liked something, he liked it. And he knew what to like. This business wasn't built on his.... This business was built by people with a terrrific knowledge...R; and they were very sure of themselves. F: That's right. R; Very definite personalities. F: and very sure of what the world of fashion had to say and mean. So when Mr. Goodman looked at something and made a face, we kne that was going to be eliminated. When he like~~d~~ ~~XXXX~~ it..... R: Hmmm. F: Once in a while, I imagine, I can't recall anything specific, Leslie's path and Mr. Goodman's crossed continually, so there was no doubt what fabrics were being bought for instance and she would be figuring something and I remember he would pick up something and and say to Leslie, it's beautiful, do you think you can do anything, then take it, don't worry about the price.

Take it. Sometimes she would XXXXXX hesitate. In those days we would have fabrics that ranged from 25, to 40 to 50 dollars a yard, some our famous brocades that we had made into evening clothes. R: When you mentioned about Miss Leslie and Mr. Goodman and so forth, I have to go back to 616 again and ask you one other question. Can you describe what the one salon looked like. Where the presentations were made? F: Yes, yes.

R: On the second floor, that I feel should go with all of this. F: The 2nd floor room was the length and depth of the building. The front of it was this big glass window. R: yes, that faced directly onto fifth, F: fifth avenue, with a pale grey sofa in front of it, one or two? F: One and I think one in front of it on the other wall. A few chairs about. R: Were there chandeliers in the room at this particular location? F: Oh yes, I can't remember what they looked like, but we must have had light. That was the day before fluorescent lighting, before indirect lighting and you had to throw a switch and the chandelier would er, of course. I think we had crystal chandeliers. R: That's what I meant. F: Yes, I think they would be. R: Because I know in this building there are beautiful chandeliers and Mr. Goodman must have picked them out, they are just exquisite. What was the type of furniture in that salon. Was it French, like here? F: No, it was.. the sofas I remember were definite, very tailored. Lawson sofa. R: Lawson? F: I.... now wait a minute don't go quoting me. . I don't know, in the sense that it was simply tailored. I don't remember... R: In other words they were not to your recollection,

French? F: No. not to my recollection. I think the high fashion went into this building. R: Then it became all French. F: Yes and that fourth floor showroom. R: Yes, I have pictures of that. F: The other was a much simpler room. R: Much simpler in detail? F: In detail too. You see.... R: Was there grey also in this salon, grey carpeting, it was grey carpeting that came into this also, it sort of followed along. F: Well, it's grey, grey is a basic color to show off colors against so, but it was a very simple room, the elevator in the center. One door beyond the elevator which led into what was called the salesman's room. R: And that was very small? F: Very small, very compact just for the different saleswomen and on Saturday's there was always the continuing bridge game. R: Oh. F: Well, what else would those women do? We didn't have many customers on Saturday so they played bridge. R: Yes that's true, the way of doing things were far different in Summers it was closed on Saturday anyway. F: Oh we never opened, We used to have any occasion, there's an occasion for closing. R: When did you come to BG may I ask? F: September, 1919. R: All right, that's very good because BG moved into the 616 location in 1914. You came five years after. Do you remember, this is a very difficult question, any person that you ever spoke to that made any remark about the 32nd street location? F: Sure. R: That to me is, I have so little, I have nothing. F: Mary Gleason came 32nd street. I believe... R: Miss Franklin didn't, she was in between, just at the crust. F: My earliest recollection of Miss Franco was the year I came to work and was sent up to the fifth floor to find out what some of the fitters needed. I came to work from the office. I didn't like office work. One of the shoppers at that time was sick for several weeks

and they asked me if I would mind running some errands and I immediately fell in love with the great outdoors of New York City, with its department stores, they told me where to go, what to look for. I presume I had a certain amount of native intelligence and was told 2-inch black velvet ribbon, I didn't bring one and a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch. And I liked that part. So I just did more and more and left Charlie Silverstein who was our whole book-keeping force alone. and he got himself another assistant, at that time. R: What do you remember about your first meeting with Miss Franco. You started to say that you had to go up to the fifth floor. F: Fifth floor and there in a small room, right next to the elevator was a small designing room, this was Miss Ethel Franco's designing room. I believe her fitter was a Mrs. Wasserman. Ethel Franco was a young woman, I don't believe she ever put on a pound or lost a pound. R: She's a person that aged very, very gracefully. You hardly knew.... F: Did she age at all? R: Really, looking at the different photographs from different years she was so consistent in her dress, her manner and her face. F: Her simple hair-do. R: Yes, with a bow. F: And even in those years she had a, what I later, later described as a sort of classic beauty. Her face was always composed, her body and yet she gave off a feeling of doing, of being. R: A presence. F: Yes, a presence. R: A substance. F: And Mrs. Wasserman asked me to come in and asked me what I was doing up there and I said I really don't belong here I'm working in the office but Helen, for a thousand dollars I couldn't have thought of that name, now suddenly, what was her 1st name? I can't remember, Helen is home sick and they asked me to run downtown do you need anything? I am going down to Alton's? Oh good, good good, Miss Franco said, I can't remember exactly what she asked for but she said would you look and see if they have this and this. R: So you just sort of tumbled into.... F: That's it, just like that, just like that. R: Miss Franco in 1919 was doing some of her own designs? F: Oh yes. R: In other words she was not a directress as I remember her. F: No. R: I thought. F: I can't remember exactly when she came but she was there when I came. R: She came to B in 1914. F: But she was a designer. R: At that time when you came. F: When I came. R: All right. That's important. F: ... She had her own designing room and the workroom outside was her room. A designing room R: Mrs. Gleason hadn't arrived yet as a designer? F: Mary Gleason was selling downstairs R: Oh she was selling, she didn't start as a designer there. F: No, Mary Gleason was selling and Mary Gleason was already designing tea gowns. R: Exclusively. F: At that time tea gowns and hostess gowns were an important part of any woman's wardrobe. You had to have several hostess gowns to entertain, and tea gowns. R: Miss Franco was going to Europe. F: I don't remember any part of that. That was all too vague. I really wasn't. R: All right, I was just thinking to myself that she was going to Europe at the same time she was designing. I have to find that out. F: I don't know. I was young. I was 17. I was very involved in my young personal life, in getting an education in life and in dancing and in boys and everything else but what was going on around me during working hours.

That was just because I had to work, that's all. ~~As~~ that all this comes back in retrospect. R: My, you do bring it back. F: Well, This was all roots. R: No, but the way you are saying it to me, is so natural and so important. F: Well, these are the roots from which I grew. I developed afterwards. I never worked anywhere else. I had never worked anywhere. I had never come in contact with people I had to obey or be polite to except my own family so that I was flung out into the business world and found that it was a very nice world and I liked it. So that meeting the people, I remember at that time there was a well, Louie was working then, Stassen? was already there I remember. R: Was Madame Pauline there? F: Madame Pauline was already there, Pauline Kremlin? Kremlin? I think she had a workroom. Pauline had a workroom. R: She's the one that was the overseer, ~~so~~ to speak, later on of the girls. F: Yes, but ~~at~~ that time Pauline had a workroom. She was a fitter. At 616 Pauline was a fitter. Her brother was Mr. Kremlin~~s~~ at B. Altman's. I think he was the buyer or the assistant buyer for their woolens. When I got into any difficulty I would go to Mr. Kremlin~~s~~ at B. Altman's and Co. B. Altman and Co. had a fabulous fabric department in those years, so did Lord and Taylor. R: Yes, well they had a fabric department until the last five ~~years~~ when they phased it out. Getting back to my remark about whether you remember anyone ~~saying~~ anything about the 32nd street location, I have no... F: Well, I don't know you see, when I came into 616, Mary Gleason had come up from 32nd St. R: Ha, I know, do you remember Lottie Plump? F: Yes. R: Did you converse with her? F: No. ~~X~~ until many, many years later in this building. R: All right, do you remember seeing her at the time you came to work? F: I, conscientiously, can't say that I remember. R: But you remember her when ~~you~~ came to work here in this building? F: Well, we moved up here~~s~~ then R: O that's right, she was away for a while so... All right, let me ask you this, what do you remember of her when you first remember her? F: Her smile. R: Her smile. She fascinates me to because she was employed for such a long history and I would give anything to have a picture of her when she was a young woman, but it is impossible ~~xxxxx~~ to find it. F: I'm sorry, but my photographs are gone because I had a dress... R: Yes, the carnation one. F: well, that I still have. You're welcome to that if you tell me when to bring it. I will be glad to bring it for you. But I had a dress, when Mr. Dediscar?, who was our controller here retired, there was a big party given for him. It was in early July or something because the Goodman's were all away. They were all in Europe. I had a dress made by, not one of these dressmakers but a local dressmaker from one of the sketches... one of Miss Franco's designs. I had a dress... I'm sorry, it was a beautiful dress. It's gone but... R: What one person do you remember the most vividly of the people that you worked with so long. That's a question out of left field and I'm just going to throw it at you. ~~X~~ Because there ~~were~~ so many personalities.... F: Well, how ~~an~~ I

pick any one. R: Well, I just thought maybe that being one person you might have had one that did strike you as... F: Bernard Newman. R: Very good. Would you speak about him? F: Wow! I simply reeked of Bernard Newman. We worked together, we fought together, we would meet ~~ok~~ ^{sus} outside, when we were young at the Metropolitan we would fall all over each other. R: Well, I want you to say something about him because I've got material on him that is going into the collection and whatever more I have makes it that much more important. Mrs. Brandeis was kind enough to give me sketches of his work, some photographs of his Hollywood work, a photograph of him and I need more. F: When I ~~went~~ off, after I had been working for 26 years at Bergdorf, after my mother died, and ~~then~~ then my responsibilities were tucked away, I took a leave of absence from the store at that time and I went to the west coast. Bernard Newman was working in Hollywood. I contacted him and he, gracious that he was, invited me to come out to the studios, ~~wlk~~ me all over the place, we had lunch there. Of course every one wondered who this little bitsy thing was tagging along behind him and he was always such a prince among men, he made such a fuss, made me feel so..... Miss Stell, who ~~was~~ his ...who was in charge of his workrooms. R: Yes, and who now is in charge of the workrooms at ~~I, Magnin,~~ F: Yes, she wanted to know in those years if I was coming to work, if I were going to stay in Los Angeles but I was too much of a New Yorker for anything but New York. But he was a very...talking of Bernard Newman, a truly creative designer in the sense that he would experiment ~~thnx~~ with things that were ~~not~~ way out but things that were not quite fashionable and he would create fashion. R: He would adapt. F: He would adapt. R: He would put things together. Part of this and part of this and put it together. Do you remember a particular situation that involved him. Whether a situation with other people that would show...F:: Well, it's difficult to say. You see, for instance, the last years that I was here our office was... R: All the way around. F: His designing studio was around, even if he had nothing to do, if he was just going by he would stick in his nose and say something sunny. R: He had a ~~great~~ sense of humor, I know. F: Because we had two doors and he would come in one and I would say, Yes, Mr. Newman? ~~and~~ "Just walking through" or he would make some other funny remark. I would say to Mr. Newman, the place is so small why do you have to come through here. It's an open door. You see, things of that sort. He was just so human and wonderful to work with. R: This may be a strange question. Could you tell me the difference between Leslie Morris's workroom and Bernard Newman's. Is there something you could say about one designing studio that was different from the other? It's a very hard question. It's a very funny question but it's just something that popped up. Would there be one something that would indicate a difference in ~~their~~ two ~~rooms~~? F: Well, the fact was that Leslie's workroom was right outside her designing room. R: Yes, now I'm speaking about her designing room. F: Her designing room? Oh you mean her studio. R: Her studio that's what I mean, the

difference, could you think of some way of differentiating the style, the way it was between her studio and his studio? F: Well, I think Bernard's studio was more streamlined than Leslie's. Leslie had notes and sketches on her bulletin, ^{board}, she kept much more fabrics in her studio than Bernard did. They were around, in the corner, standing up on a chair, she needed that. (Side one of the Tape ended here)

Side Two: