

SL3 – Sam Liskov,

"Family's Arrival in Bridgeport, Father's First Occupation"

Time-Line: Decade I, Local and National Events, Explanation of Population, 1890-1910, "Height of immigration"
Transcript: pp. 5-6

SL: My father was a peddler. He had a horse and wagon just as a great many other immigrants had and they peddled. In the summer time they would go down to Water Street where there was a big open air market and load up with whatever was available and peddle it around the streets of Bridgeport. That was in the summer. It was a seasonal business. The rest of the year I think that he picked up junk and sold it to the Jacob Brothers Scrap Yard or Handleman's. Maybe they were called rag pickers. I'm not sure. There was some term that was ascribed to these junk peddlers.

I: There were probably a lot of them back then. Must have been keen competition.

SL: Well, there were because it was something they could do. I remember that my father had a horse and wagon and we kept it in the barn in back of the house where we lived. In fact, one of my earliest recollections was across the street on State Street, between John and State Streets, there was a big open horse auction lot and once a week they would have a horse auction and if one of the peddler's horses developed some disease or became lame or something like that, they would go to Hamilton's

Brothers who had a stable there. There was a row of old houses on John Street with an entrance on John and perhaps on Broad Street. It might be where the western edge of the Chase Manhattan Bank property is now. Or maybe where the old Algonquin Club was.

I: So you dad was lucky enough to actually be able to own his own horse.

SL: Yes, he could look into the mouth of a horse and look over the teeth and kind of go over their legs to make sure that they were sound.