

CHAPTER 5 EMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO MILITARY SERVICE

When I was 10 years old, my Father told me that I was old enough to work and earn my own way through life as his Father taught him. He would provide me with a nice place to live and food, but I needed to learn how to work and manage my money as he had to do.

He said that he had arranged a job for me to work on a farm in Enterprise. He was working in the Enterprise area, so he could take me to the farm where I would be working. My job was thinning Sugar Beets. The row of Sugar Beets was so long that I could hardly see the other end. By the end of the hot day, I finally got to the end of that row about the time that my father came to pick me up. I received my days' pay of 35 Cents. Yes, I was proud that I had worked and earned my first pay.

I didn't go back to the farm in enterprise again for two reasons, one is that Dad didn't have work in the Enterprise area and so I had no way to get to the farm, and I told my Dad that I felt that I could find better work. I know that my dad was disappointed in me, and told me that it would be up to me to find my employment.



We were living in the Eden Apartments at that time and I found plenty of jobs around the neighborhood doing yard



work. At 10 cents an hour, I was very busy. I needed a place to keep my tools and stuff and I rented one of the vacant apartment garages. I don't remember how much rent I paid, but it was something like \$2.50/month. Now I had a place for my stuff, I added another business to my schedule where I would go down to the city park and collect night crawlers (worms) for fishing and I would sell them at \$.10 a dozen. I received more of an income

from this business than the yard work.

We moved from the Eden apartments over to the apartment above the mullet jewelry store. For the first time I had my own bedroom but I sure missed the garage where it could store all my stuff, so had looked for jobs I didn't have to have tools. My brother went into the military at this time and now I had access to use his bicycle. I was able to keep the bicycle just inside the door as shown in the picture to the far left which was a stairway going up to our apartment. This gave me a lot of mobility to be able to move around instead of having to walk everywhere I went.

I guess that I was eleven years old when he took me to Enterprise, Utah to work on a Farm. I know that he had made some kind of arrangements with a farmer and so my first employment was a long row of sugar beets that I was too thin and weed. I think that I had a peanut butter sandwich with me for lunch. I was just nearing the end of the row when Dad came back for me. My day's pay was 35 cents. I told my dad, and I would find my own work.

I became self-employed catching night crawler worms at the Cedar City Park at night. I would then make up a sign and sell them for 10 cents a dozen to people going fishing. And I could set in the shade to sell them and not have to work in the Sun all day as was the case working on the Farm. My first day at selling night crawlers I made over one dollar.

Living in a small apartment, I had no place to keep things. The apartments had small garages for rent. That was a lot of money, but I wanted a place to spend time and keep my stuff that I expanded my self-employment to doing odd jobs including a lot of weeding and most of that was in the hot sun. I did babysitting when I had a chance.

I was custodian at a store called "Modern Style Shop" which was a dress store. I did all the cleaning including washing the big store windows, working after school for a couple of years. I think that it only paid two or three dollars a week, but was better than thinning beets.

Of course, there were not TV back in those days and there were not many interesting radio programs on the old Atwater Kent radio. I was one that didn't like to stay around the small apartment that we lived in.

An example of that was the summer that I was able ride the bike to work at the Cedar city Turkey picking plant. I don't remember whether I was 13 or 14 years old, I was hired for the summer picking turkeys. I worked at the Turkey Picking plant in the summer and made big money, even 35 cents an hour. It was long hours and a stinky place to work.

The turkeys would be hung from the ceiling and you could adjust to the height that was convenient for you to pick the feathers off the turkey. It was a terrible job and I really hated it but some days I could earn as much as three dollars a day which was very good wages for a kid my age.

I was able to get a job working at the theater as a custodian to relieve the regular custodian a day off. My pay for that was free passes to the shows at either of the theaters in Cedar city.

After getting bored watching the shows, I spent all my time in the projection booth learning to operate the projection equipment. One night I was in the booth by myself running the equipment when John Rowberry the manager came to the booth and found me all along. He was very upset because films in those days were very Flammable. He asked where Henry Grimshaw was and I told him I think he went next door to the confectionary store. He went next door and asked Henry about leaving this young kid up in the projection booth running the machines. Henry told him no problem as I had been running machines for weeks. John Rowberry came back up the projection booth and watched me the rest of the evening.



After the show and I was closing down the machines he asked me to drop by the next day in his office at the other theater the next evening. I was excited that I was going to be able to get a job as a projectionist, I talked to him and he told me at the age of 13, I was really too young to be an usher but if I would be an usher for 2 or 3 years then he would hire me as a projectionist. Within three months I was hired as a projectionist five night a week, this opportunity came to me as in many other fields that there is a major shortage of people in the technical field due to the demands of the military and the war effort.





“To Whom It May Concern; 29 Dec 1947

The bearer of this letter, Mr. Russell Bateman, was employed by us in the capacity of a projectionist and a soundman for over a period of three years. During the time he was employed it was necessary for him to maintain and service our sound system. He did an excellent job and we did not experience a single sound failure during the time he was employed with BIOS we found Mr. Bateman to be excellent character and efficient in every respect any favors you may be able to extend to Mr. Bateman will be greatly appreciated by the writer's. Yours truly, John Rowberry”.

I also hung around radio station KSUB and became a good friend of Herschel Urie who was the chief engineer *and* manager of the station. I think part of the interest in Main was that I had a beautiful sister that he was interested in. Many times, I had wished she had been interested in him because he became a college professor at Weber State College and very successful.

I first went on the radio at the age of 14 when Herschel let me do some announcing and play the 16” 33 1/3 record programs. These were programs like “Hymns of all Churches and Jack Armstrong.



Radio KSUB was running only about 80 Watts back then and the transmitter and studio was located on the corner of the BAC (Branch Agriculture College – now called SUU). Our on-air monitor was an old AM table top radio that you had to turn down the volume before going on the air with the microphone. Several times I didn't turn the volume down and it created a squeal over the air.

One time we had a part in the transmitter failed and we couldn't purchase a new part due to war shortages. We drove to St. George and barrowed one out of an Amateur Radio Operators transmitter. (See my chapter 14),

A man by the name of “Woody” opened up a Radio store called “Paramount Radio”. I don’t remember much about his background other than he was severely injured in the great earth Quake in the San Francisco. He had his chest crushed so had to large indent area in his chest. We got to be great friends and he let me hang around his radio shop.

KSUB Southern Utah Broadcasting Co

December 31, 1947

To Whom It May Concern:

Gentlemen,

During the past two years, Mr. Russell Bateman has worked for KSUB from time to time, assisting in control room operation and remote broadcasts. His work with us has been very satisfactory.

Very truly yours, Hurschell G. Urie, Chief Engineer



Over the next couple of years, we did a lot of fun things together. I was permitted to put the large (about 16”) records on the player and play them over the air. These records were like “Hymns of all churches” and “the lone ranger”. I would even go on the air noting the next program that was to be played. There was a regular radio in the studio that you would have to turn down the volume so that you wouldn’t get the squealing – feedback when you went on the air. After having that experience a few times, I did better.

I remember that we tried to do some drama radio programs that involved Herschel, Woody and a couple of others including me. Herschel came up with some script for the radio program and we would act out our parts. I remember that there wasn’t enough in number to take all the parts, so Herschel would put marbles in his mouth so that he would sound like a different person. These programs would originate in Woody’s store and feed the KSUB Station via telephone lines.

At the Paramount Radio Store, I tore radios apart for the parts to be used for repairing radios in that new radio tubes and parts were not available. I Tested radio tubes from the old radios etc and did some repair on radios. I was never paid for my participation of activities at KSUB or Paramount Radio but was rewarded with experience and a lot of good fellowship.

I was working five nights a week as a projectionist at the two theatres and making good money for a kid 13 to 15 year of age.

When was 15, I was working repairing Bikes at the H M Ensley Bike shop in Cedar City when they announced the first Atom Bomb was dropped on August 6, 1945 Shortly after that, the War ended and Dad was transferred back to St. George.



After I moved back to St. George I still had ties with KSUB. KSUB had increased power and could be heard in St. George in the day time. I ran the first radio broadcast out of St. George. Herschel shipped a Remote-Control Box to me on the bus and I connected it to long distance telephone lines back to Cedar City. It was the big revival Football Game between BAC (Cedar City) and Dixie (St. George). It worked out so well that

Dick Hammer, owner of the famous “Dick’s Café” with the sponsors of Shell Gas, did a week broadcast out of St. George’s Dick’s Café. I can remember the opening theme song “Stop at Shell and get some Gas. Then all your worries then shall pass” This was a live Country Western Band. I was the Engineer and equipment operator for the weekly program for over a year.

I also operated the first and only sound system South of Cedar City. Sponsored by Urie Brothers Sound, I mounted one of their systems in my old 1939 Desoto and then my new



1948 red Studebaker car. St. George only had a weekly newspaper then. I advertised important events by driving up and down the streets of St. George announcing the special event. I was invited to all football games and other events.

Some things I charged for and some I donated my time.

Urie Brother Sound company 389 N. third West Cedar city Utah December 31, 1947

to whom it may concern:

Mr. Russell Bateman has operated one of our sets of sound equipment for the past year and will continue to operate this equipment indefinitely. This has meant that Mr. Bateman has been responsible for the proper operation of all the equipment in his charge. This he has accomplished in a very completely satisfactory manner.

Very truly yours Herschel Urie.



I picked up jobs wherever I could find them. For several weeks, I washed dishes at the St. George Big Hand Café. It was a Bus Stop and a very busy restaurant. There was no automatic dish washer, all by hand. It was not a fun job.

In those days, Jut boxes stores. The music was contained in side of the boxes. A nickel largely the only place



were very popular in areas like restraints and some played from 78 RPM or 45 RPM records that were main unit. Some locations had remote control deposited would play your selected song. This was you could hear this music.



I was the on-call Jute box repair person in the St. George area. KNUDSEN MUSIC COMPANY – COIN OPERATED MACHINES 287 North Third East, Provo, Utah.

To Whom It May Concern:

Russell Bateman has successfully answered service calls on our coin operated phonographs for more than a year in Washington County.

He is adapt for installation work and has always been dependable.

George A. Burch Route Manger.

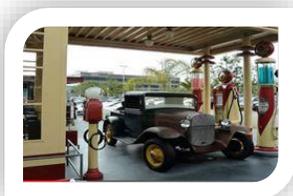


One summer, I worked at Service Stations. For several months, I worked at the Cox Texaco Service Station on Bluff Street. At that time, it was the first Service Station after leaving Los Vegas. I worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week for \$100/month. I later changed to work at Pioneer Service Station which was in the middle of town. The pay was better where I earned \$90/month for five 8 hour shifts.

Pioneer service St. George Utah May 13, 1948

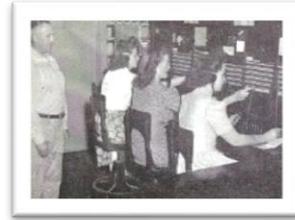
to whom it may concern:

Russell Bateman worked for me in the service station business for a year I am intimately acquainted with this young man and after observing him in his business and others in which he has been engaged I can recommend him for energy honesty and initiative in any job he makes strife to do signed Ralph J. Lauper manager



1946 Gas cost 21 cents a gallon and was measured by reading the marks inside the Glass holding containers located on top of the gas pump. After dispensing the gas, you would refill the glass holding container by pumped the gas using a hand pump. The wind shields were always washed, and oil levels were checked on every car. The air pressure in the tires was check when the customer requested.

I was hired as a Janitor at the St. George Telephone Office on 1 April 1946. My beginning pay was \$22 week and on March 2 I received a rise to #32.50/week. I usually went in, in the early morning before going to school and again right after school. Part of my assignment was cleaning pay telephone and telephone booths



around St. George and keeping the sock room organized.

The manager of the St. George Office (plant 7310) was Tom Jones. Alvy Mulstine was the combination man. Alvy installed all the telephones in the St. George and Hurricane area and the “Magneto” lines running up to Pine Valley. We had a manual four position switch board that was normally manned with three telephone operators. I was not part of the Union and took a shift in manning the Switch Board answering emergency calls during the telephone operators strike. If I was in the office at noon time, they

would let me turned the switch that operated the daily test of the voluntary Fire Department Siren. A number of times, I turn the red light on that was located in the middle of the intersection of main and Tabernacle for signaling the duty policeman to call the switchboard. I resigned on 22 May 1948 when I moved to Salt Lake.

Record of Russell R. Bateman, St. George, Utah (M S T & T)

class of emp	Nature of change	title	Location	Dept Code	Date eff	Rate
TP 12	Engaged addition	Janitor	St. George	Plant 7310	4-1-46	\$22.00 Wk
	Increase	Janitor	St. George	Plant 7310	3-8-47	\$32.50 Wk
RP 12	chg in Classific	Janitor	St. George	Plant 7310	3-1-47	\$32.50 Wk
Gen. emp.		"	"	"	5-15-47	\$32.50 Wk
	Resigned	"	"	"	5-22-48	

I was also scheduled to attend an Organ installation school, San Francisco for the St. George McAllister Music Store, but I was canceled as I was leaving town. I think that the school found out that I was just a High School Kid and the School was for only Organ Service Professionals. Mr. McAllister had to go back hiring Organ Installers from Provo and Las Vegas.

When I moved back from Cedar City at the end of 1945, McKay Larson hired me as a projectionist at the Gaiety and Dixie Theatres, working five nights a week.



After a few weeks, McKay left for the service or defense job. The owner Merv Reber offered me McKay's position of managing the projection booths at both of his Theatres. I would work five nights a week at the theatres and train and hire other to work the nights. It was then, my responsibility to ensure that there were trained projectionists in each theatre each night. It was also my obligation to provide all the maintenance and repair of the projection and sound equipment.

McKay Larson returned back to St. George in February 1948 and wanted his job back of the theaters. Merv Reber promoted me to manage the Gaiety Theatre. This theatre is now called the St. George Electric Theatre, This assignment included opening and closing the theatre's and working with the cashier and ushers. I did go back and do some projection work due to sickness and other emergencies.

Dixie Theatre Co. Dixie and Gaiety Theatres, St. George, Utah

12 May 1848

To Whom It May Concern:

Mr. Russell Bateman has worked for me for the past three years as projectionist and assistant manager of one of my theatres.

I have Russell to be very efficient, honest and dependable while in my employment.

Signed, RM Reber.



I was doing quite well as a High School kid. I had a checking and savings account and the only kid in my High School that owned a new Car. (See Chapter 14) It really irritated me when people, including the Dixie College President Art Brun making statements of "how nice it was that for my father to buy me a new car. They wouldn't believe me that I was paying for the car own. My parents provided me with a loving home and food to eat but felt that was good training for me to provide my own money for everything else.

After I graduated from High School and had the resume letters in hand, I headed for Salt Lake to find bigger and better things. I applied for a number of different jobs. Sears & Roebuck offered me a job working in their tire shop in Salt Lake City. I also worked part time for Poll and Austin Sound and doing things like the 1948 Democratic Convention at the Salt Lake Fair Grounds.



The next few weeks changing tires, installing Seat Covers, I finally advanced to be in charge of the battery Shop.



After working for Sears, a couple of months, I knew that mounting tires and seat covers, was not the occupation that I wanted. I didn't have money to go to school. I talked with the Navy recruiter and was enlisted to go to Radio Material School.

See my chapter 07-Navy

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