I hereby give the tapes and transcriptions made of interviews recorded on March 1, 1989 to the Oral History Library of the Fashion Institute of Technology, for such uses and purposes as the Director of the Oral History Library shall determine.

MEMOIORIST

Signed

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Westmont Home

June 6, 1989

Date

INTERVIEWER

Signed

July 11, 1989

Date
Dear Ms. Felsher:

This letter will confirm my understanding and agreement with the Fashion Institute of Technology with respect to my participation in a series of interviews conducted by the College's Oral History Research Program.

1. The interviews will be taped and a transcript made of the tapes. The tapes and transcript (collectively called the "Work") will be maintained by the College and made available by the College in accordance with College rules and general policies for research and other scholarly purposes.

2. I hereby grant, assign and transfer to the College all right, title and interest in the Work, including the literary rights and the copyright, except that I shall retain the right to copy, use and publish the Work in part or in full until the earlier of my death or __________ 19___.

3. This letter contains our entire and complete understanding.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

Date June 9, 1989

ACCEPTED AND AGREED:

THE FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

[Signature]
SADIE ZONDERVAN

b. January 2, 1902
Paterson, NJ

Quill winder, pinner and ribbon blocker

Frank & Dugan, quill winder
Pelgram & Meyers
Buser Silk Co., quill winder
Copyright The Fashion Institute of Technology
27th Street and Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10001
Interview with Sadie Zondervan for the Fashion Institute of Technology, March 1, 1989.

INTERVIEWER: I just want to ask you some questions and you can talk to me. You started out in the mill. How old were you when you got your first job?

ZONDERVAN: Around 14. In them days you could, you know, but you had to have your working papers. You had to go up to City Hall and then Acorn, he was the man that gave you the working papers so you could work in the mills.

IN: Do you remember what year this was that we're talking about?

SZ: I can't really remember.

IN: Did anyone in your family work in the mills?

SZ: Yes. My father, he was a broad silk weaver. Then I had a brother, he was also a weaver, but he worked in the ribbon, in the smaller.

IN: Ribbons.

SZ: Yes.

IN: Did they help you get your first job?

SZ: Yes, my father, I think he helped me.

IN: Did you work in the same mill that he worked in?

SZ: No, I didn't.

IN: Do you remember what mill you worked in, the first one?

SZ: The first one I think I worked in -- Oh, I forget what it was. It's on Market Street.
IN: Well, we'll come back to that. Maybe you'll remember when we're talking. What was your first job?

SZ: My first job was a quill winder. I was a quill winder and I worked in -- Oh, see, it was on Market Street and it was across the street from the Cardbons. They had trolley cars then. Frank & Dugan's, that's where I was.

IN: Frank & Dugan's?

SZ: Frank & Dugan's, yes. It was on Market Street and the Cardbons was right across the street from there. I worked there as a blocker then.

IN: Okay. Let's start out first. Tell me about, did you have to be taught to be a quill winder?

SZ: Oh, yes. Sure, we had to be taught.

IN: Who taught you?

SZ: Well, the forelady that was in the place there.

IN: Were you a student or did you start working immediately?

SZ: Yes. No. I had to learn it and then they hired me. Then I learned to quill there.

IN: Did they pay you when you were learning?

SZ: No, you got your -- At the end of the week, then they paid you.

IN: Okay. So that it was a short time you learned.

SZ: It was a short time learning, yes.

IN: And then you were a quill winder. How long did you
do that?

SZ: That was quite a few years.

IN: Tell me about the job. What did you do as a quill winder?

SZ: Well, we had a machine and then you had a board on the top. You had weavers and you had boards on the top. I was a quill winder and they used to bring their boards down and we used to have to fill them up.

IN: When you say "board" are you talking about a shuttle?

SZ: No.

IN: What I would call a shuttle?

SZ: No, not a shuttle. It was a board about like this and they were half like. Different shades of quills that the weavers had.

IN: Were the quills put on this board?

SZ: On this board, yes. They was put on the board there. Then we had to do the quilling and the weavers would come down for the boards and pick them up.

IN: You didn't have to bring the boards to the weavers?

SZ: No, I didn't have to. They used to come down to us for the boards. Then they brought them upstairs and when the boards were empty then they'd come down. We'd have to have it filled again for them.

IN: How many quills were on a board?
SZ: I can't remember that.

IN: These were small quills.

SZ: Yes, they were small quills. I don't know, maybe about six quills on the board.

IN: How often would they come down to you to fill that board up? Would it take them long to use the yarn?

SZ: No, not too long. Not too long, no. Maybe about, oh, I'll say a couple hours.

IN: Were you busy? I mean was this a busy job? Were you constantly filling up quills?

SZ: Yes. Filling quills, yes. I was at a couple of mills as a quill winder. I worked in Pelgram & Meyer's. Same thing. As a quiller.

IN: Let me go back to your quill winding. How many hours a day did you work?

SZ: Well --

IN: Was it all day long?

SZ: Yes.

IN: How many days a week?

SZ: Every day of the week until Friday.

IN: And you didn't work Saturday.

SZ: No, we didn't work Saturdays. No.

IN: Did you have to stand the whole time?

SZ: Well, we sat down while our machine was running and the quills was filling up. Then they had an automatic and they shut off and you took the quills off and put them on the boards for the weavers. The
weavers would come down and bring them up. He'd bring his empty board down for me to fill up.

IN: He being, most of the men?
SZ: Yes.

IN: Were most of your weavers men?
SZ: Yes.

IN: And this was in a ribbon factory?
SZ: Yes, a ribbon factory. They had quill winders, winders, weavers, warpers. They had all that.

IN: And you always stayed as a quill winder.
SZ: As a quill winder, yes.

IN: A quill winder.
SZ: As I said, a couple of places I worked as quill winders. Then my last job was in Buser's Ribbon. This is what I got.

IN: 23 years.
SZ: 23 years. That's Buser's. They had a machine. It was on a quill. Then they had a machine in back and they they wind that off. They had a cloth and it was twenty yards or how many feet? Twenty yards number of feet. Five yards and so on like that.

IN: Did they do multicolor?
SZ: Yes, they did. Like that color up there, too. They did that.

IN: Yes, a multicolored green.
SZ: And then as it got filled up, when it was twenty yards, then you took a pin and stuck it in there.
Okay. Then this is when you were a pinner? That's what it was called?

Yes. They blocked this and then we had to pin it after they got down with this.

Did you also block? Did you tell me you were also a blocker?

I blocked at Frank & Dugan's, but I never was in here. I was always a pinner.

Tell me the name. Dugan's?

Frank and.

Okay. I want to write that down. Frank & Dugan. So you were a blocker. You were a quill. You wound quills.

Yes.

Do you remember what type of wages you earned when you started?

I can't remember that, no. It's quite a while ago.

You were very young when you started.

Yes.

What did you do with the money that you earned?

I brought it home to my people. Whatever I made they had to keep it and all like that.

You didn't keep any of it?

No, I didn't keep any of it.

And so you had two brothers.

I had two brothers. They were both weavers. My father was a broad silk weaver and my brother was a
IN: And did your mother work in the mills?
SZ: No, my mother never worked at nothing. No.
IN: She took care of you.
SZ: Oh, she took care of me, yes. And I had a brother, but they never worked in the silk mill. I had a brother, he worked in -- He was a manager at the American Store on Mulvin Avenue. He didn't work in the silk mill.
IN: So, the family though, there was one, two, three, four of you who worked in the silk.
SZ: There was four of us, yes.
IN: The people that you worked with at the mill, were any of them your friends? Were you friendly with the people in the mill?
SZ: Oh, yes, we were very friendly. They were very nice. Yes.
IN: Did you ever do things after work with them?
SZ: No.
IN: There was no socializing?
SZ: No, no. We just went home and that was it.
IN: Now, did I ask you are you married? Were you married?
SZ: Yes, I was married.
IN: Yes. And when did you get married?
SZ: October 5th, 1927.
IN: And did you continue to work in the silk after you
were married?
SZ: Yes, after I did. That's where I got this here. This here was my last job and I was married when I was working in here.
IN: Do you remember what year that was, your last job?
SZ: I don't know. It was '41, I think.
IN: So you worked how many years as a married woman?
SZ: Well, I was married October 5th, 1927.
IN: And so you worked from '27 to '41.
SZ: Yes.
IN: And did you have children?
SZ: No, I never could have any.
IN: So then you really work in the mills. Did your husband work in the silk mill?
SZ: No, he worked in Curtis Wright's.
IN: Which is a?
SZ: Oh, he worked as a [unclear]. You know, coming around.
IN: So your husband worked at another place and you worked in the silk.
SZ: In the silk mill, yes.
IN: Did you ever join one of the unions?
SZ: No, we never had no union. I mean they tried to have the union in our place, but it didn't work.
IN: So you never were in a union shop all those years.
SZ: No.
IN: So you had no connection with the strike, the 1913
strike. Anyone in your family?

SZ: My father. My father told me. He said that when he came over from Ireland. And then he, this was only a joke that they said, go to Paterson and money grows on trees. When he got there that was a strike for 13 weeks.

IN: That's right. That was a long strike.

SZ: That was a long strike.

IN: Now, was your father also a weaver in Ireland?

SZ: No, they worked on the farms.

IN: So you never joined a union.

SZ: No.

IN: Have we named all the places that you worked?

SZ: Yes. I worked in Frank & Dugan's, and then I worked in Pelgram Meyer's, and then I worked in Buser's. That's about all.

IN: And did you stay long periods of time in each one?

SZ: Oh, not too long. Not very long in Pelgram Meyer's. But this is the longest I worked, 23 years.

IN: That's a long time.

SZ: That was my last job because I didn't work anymore.

IN: You moved then for better wages?

SZ: No. No. What do you mean?

IN: Well, you left Frank & Dugan. Why did you leave there?

SZ: Well, because they were getting slow.
IN: Oh, okay. And then Pelgram?

SZ: I left there because I didn't care too much for that building. Then I got the job here and then that was it.

IN: I understand the pinning. Tell me about the blocking with the ribbons. What was the process?

SZ: Well, the girls brought them different lots and then they had a reel on the back of their machine. Then they put it through a machine that had a timer on it. Says twenty yards on it. So then they blocked it up like that for twenty yards and they cut it off.

IN: So a blocker was really a counter. When I think of blocking I think of blocking a sweater and shaping it.

SZ: No, this was on the reels, like silk. Silk on the reels. Like what I showed you. Like that. Different widths. They had threes, ones, ones and halves.

IN: How many at a time did that machine do?

SZ: I don't know.

IN: A lot?

SZ: It's a certain lot that they had. They used to bring them lots. Then when they got done with their lots then they would give them another.

IN: Could there be ten of them in front? You know, ten wheels?
SZ: No. There's only one.

IN: Only one at a time. Okay. Did you ever work in a broad loom? No, you've only worked in ribbons.

SZ: No, in ribbon. That was all.

IN: When you think back about working there, did you enjoy it?

SZ: Yes, I liked worked. I loved quill winding. I loved it, yes. I liked it.

IN: Why did you like it?

SZ: Because it was a nice job. It wasn't hard. We used to have different girls working along side of us and we all got along nice together.

IN: And you chatted. Did they allow you to talk while you were working?

SZ: Well, yes. They'd pass and say "Hello. How you doing?" and so on like that. But they didn't want you to talk while you was doing your work.

IN: Were there a lot of windows? Was it light?

SZ: Oh, yes. It was all light. It was a nice place.

IN: In all the places?

SZ: All the places were nice, yes.

IN: Were they clean?

SZ: Oh, yes, very clean. Yes, nice places to work.

IN: And did you get lunch hours?

SZ: Yes, we used to have our lunch hours. Twelve o'clock and then get back by one.

IN: And work until what time?
SZ: Five o'clock.
IN: So you worked ten hour days?
SZ: Yes.
IN: Were you tired?
SZ: Well, sure I got tired. Them' days you worked. You didn't work like here.
IN: True. People work very short hours these days.
SZ: Yes, you're right.
IN: And do very little.
SZ: And how.
IN: But it's a different world out here. I think I'm going to turn the tape recorder off for a second just to go through these notes. [tape turned off] But where you were working it wasn't noisy?
SZ: No, no.
IN: Were you far away from the weavers?
SZ: Well, we were on the second floor. They were upstairs on the third floor, the weavers. The weavers, some places they had the weavers right in where there was quill winding, but we were away from them. We didn't hear the noise.
IN: That's why they came down to you.
SZ: They came down.
IN: To pick up their quills.
SZ: To pick up their quills, yes. That's about all I know.
IN: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.
End of Interview
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