

## Henry Zarrow

A generous heart and humble spirit makes him one of Oklahoma's most beloved.

### Chapter 1 - 0:58

#### Introduction

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**John Erling:** Henry Zarrow was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on February 12, 1916. He was two months old when his parents Sam and Rose Zarrow, immigrants from Latvia, established themselves in the grocery business in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Henry was only 13 when he opened his own grocery store in west Tulsa, but he soon became interested in the used pipe business and established Sooner Pipe & Iron which was later known as Sooner Pipe & Supply. Henry Zarrow went on to become a successful businessman but also became known as a person with a generous heart. His philanthropy was influenced by his wife Anne and through the Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation they targeted children's issues, the homeless and the poor. Listen now to the man who became known as "Mr. Henry" tell his story of simple beginnings which led to a life of sharing and serving others in our community, brought to you by the Founding Sponsors of [VoicesofOklahoma.com](http://VoicesofOklahoma.com).

### Chapter 2 - 6:48

#### Henry The Business Man

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**Henry Zarrow:** I was born February 12, 1916 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I came to Tulsa when I was two months old. My Dad was going to go into the steel business in Sapulpa, but it turned out that one of his relatives had a grocery store, so he ended up buying that. He had a building at 1427 East 6th Street before the 1929 Depression. We used to rent it out and he had a place in Seminole, Oklahoma. When the oil was so cheap that we had to sell it out, because I think the oil I think was either 25 cents a barrel and when I went down to help him, there wasn't enough business. So I would push cars around in the mud and that's the way I would make a little money.

**John Erling:** How old were you then?

HZ: I was about 13.

JE: Your family moved here, did you have brothers and sisters?

HZ: My brother was 10 years younger than I am and his name is Jack. And my sister, she died when she was 55 years old from cancer. She would have been 5 years younger than me. Her name was Dorothy Renberg. She was married to George Renberg.

JE: Why did your father choose Tulsa?

HZ: He had relatives here.

JE: Do you know what the Zarrow name means? Is there a special meaning that translates into something?

HZ: I think at the time in Russia there was an ammunitions company called Zaharoff, and my Dad happened to be named was Zaharoff and he didn't want his name mixed up with ammunitions, so he changed it to Zarrow.

JE: Your first memories in Tulsa would have come when you were about four or five or six years old. What do you remember from way back then?

HZ: Well, I used to go to Longfellow School at Sixth and Peoria. Of course we used to play in Central Park there across the street. They always kidded me that all I wanted to do was go to school. I complained that I didn't go long enough because my wife, before I married her, she asked me, "Did they teach English in Oklahoma?" And I said, "No, they only teach it everywhere." But when I was in the sixth grade, I used to teach math when the teachers were on vacation. I used to teach math a couple of weeks at a time. And still that is one of my favorite subjects, math and typing. When I went to Woodrow Wilson, we had a teacher that was wonderful. I can still type about as fast as I want to. I was at Woodrow Wilson until it was time for me to go to Central High School. I guess that was in ninth grade. I used to play football at Woodrow Wilson until I had appendicitis and then I couldn't play anymore. I used to type the School Life in high school during the lunch hour and they gave me half a year off extra for doing that. I went through high school in two and a half years and I graduated in 1934. In those days they had a 1,000 graduating from Central High.

JE: At about 13 years old or so, didn't you start a business, a grocery store?

HZ: I opened a grocery store in West Tulsa. I wanted to be in business. I saw my Dad was in the grocery business so I thought I would be in it. So I used to go open up my store in the morning and then go to the market and get the vegetables for his store. Then I would go to school. And then after school I would go back to my store and open it up. My whole inventory was only about \$900. So I finally just kind of sold a little bit, and a little bit. Mother and Dad said, "You ought to go into something else. You shouldn't be in the grocery business, you ought to be in something different." Well, I had an uncle who was in the second-hand pipe business, named Abe Miesel. I went to him and asked him if I

could learn the business from him. And he said, "I can't pay you anything but if you want to ride in the truck with me, I'll let you learn whatever I know." I said, "A fellow named Abe Pepus told me where I could get a pipe yard if I ever go into business. It will be \$20/month. So, if I ever learn the business, I'll rent that place." Well, I used to go with him to all of the different towns and he would pick up second-hand pipe and he would bring it back and make a string of pipe out of it. He had all kinds of second-hand equipment. Finally, one day he had me clean a string of rods for an oil company. I worked for most of the night and I made \$10 for that string of rods. He used to buy all of the surplus goods from a company that at that time that was called Magnolia. He had bought a pipeline from them over in Cushing, Oklahoma and he was going to take it up and sell second-hand pipe. But he said, "I'm tired. I'm 65 years old and I don't need to be driving this pickup truck. I think I'll just let you have it Henry." I said, "Well, I don't have any money Uncle Abe to pay for it." He said, "Why don't you just go ahead and when you sell it, you can pay me." So that's the way we did it. Then finally I took up the pipeline and sold the second-hand pipe and paid him.

JE: And that's when it became Sooner?

HZ: Sooner Pipe and Iron and then finally we became Sooner Pipe & Supply. And then my dad, I got him to sell his store and he moved in with me. Ten years later my brother graduated from school and he joined us. So there were three of us at Sooner.

JE: So was your Dad working for you at the time then?

HZ: Well. We've called it just family. (Laughter) He did what he wanted to do. He would call on some of the oil companies. He would also go to the bank to borrow money. He loved to pay notes. My brother was a petroleum engineer and he tried to do some oil wells and get some interests to buy some leases.

### Chapter 3 - 3:20

#### Distributor

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**John Erling:** Your education ended then at Central High School, you didn't go on did you?

**Henry Zarrow:** I went to OU for half a year. I was in ROTC there for half a year. I used to come home every Friday night and help my Dad. He was over in the north side at 352 Greenwood. He had to stay open late at night because the people that traded there were people that worked at homes. So then after Saturday night, I would take the bus and go back to Oklahoma City and then get to Norman. Finally, as I said they kept talking to me and telling me I needed to go into something else. But my first deal was I sold to an oil company named A Pepis. He had an independent oil company.

JE: You sold your pipe to them?

HZ: So I would go by with a string of pipe in my truck and sell it to him. Finally, I started buying used equipment from oil companies that had quit drilling. I'd have jars and tools and things like that. So when I opened up my pipe yard on 15 East Cameron, I had all kinds of tools. Hand tools, which are good but they were second-hand. And little by little, I started calling on oil companies myself, buying their surplus junk and stuff like that until finally, I got a distributorship from Youngstown Sheet & Tube. Pipe was awfully scarce, but they were building a new steel mill in Indiana Harbor, so they needed some distributors. They made me a distributor and that way I had new pipe. And of course pipe was scarce in those days, so I was able to sell it. And of course they owned Continental-Emsco and Continental-Emsco had let me sell their engines. In fact, Murphy is still in business here. We used to sell his engines through Continental-Emsco, which belonged to Youngstown.

JE: Who would be your customers if you were selling used pipe?

HZ: There would be a lot of independent companies that drilled oil wells that needed second-hand surface pipe, so they would buy 400 or 500 feet. But our main customers were sulphur companies and they used to buy this 8-inch pipe and run it in wells 1,200 or 1,400 feet deep because it as so reasonable. And they would steam it and make the sulphur come out. Jefferson Lake Sulphur Company was one of my best customers. They were located in Brazoria, Texas and I used to sell all of their pipe to them second-hand. Finally Harold Manley retired from Sunray and he opened up a place for Jefferson Lake Suphur Company in Canada.

JE: Although the pipe was used, there was really nothing wrong with it?

HZ: It was just old. The weight of the pipe was 28 pounds. It might not have been number one, but it was number two. But for the purpose it was used for, for using it to go in a well and for surface pipe and everything it was plenty good, and you could save a lot of money by using it.

JE: Were there other people in that business, other companies?

HZ: Yes, there were.

JE: So there was some competition then?

HZ: Right.

## Chapter 4 - 5:26

### Marriage

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**John Erling:** So some of these times we're talking about, back in '29 and '30 or '33 were in the time of the Depression. Do you have any recollection of those years?

**Henry Zarrow:** Yes, I remember like I say when I went down to Seminole that's when the boom busted in 1929. Oil was maybe at 25 or 50 cents a barrel. I had a friend that I went to school with whose Dad was in the supply business and oil was so cheap that he would give them pipe but he would take it out (get paid back) in oil while oil was so cheap. He would take the oil later. He would go ahead and give them the pipe and then they would owe him so many barrels of oil. So, maybe three or four years later, he would take the oil and it was almost \$2 or \$3 a barrel then. My friend was killed in the Battle of the Bulge.

JE: And what was his name?

HZ: His name was Albert Scar. The family is still in Shreveport. This was their oldest son who was killed.

JE: One of your best friends?

HZ: Right, yeah.

JE: Somewhere in here you were married?

HZ: Right. I was 22 years old I think. I was married 65 some years and my wife died when she was in her 80s.

JE: So if you were 22, how old was she when you were married?

HZ: She was a year older than I am. She was 23.

JE: And where did you meet her?

HZ: I met her here in Tulsa. She had three uncles here. She lived in Ohio. I guess they were looking for her to come out this way and maybe she would find a husband, she had family here and she had two uncles here. They gave a little party for her at the Mayo Hotel and I was invited with my date and I didn't get to dance with her. I was stuck with my date. So, I didn't know what to do. I was telling my mother that I felt bad. And she said, "Why don't you call her up and take her to a dance?" And I said, "Well, I'll try." She loved to go and dance. We used to go to Blue Moon north of Tulsa on Cincinnati. So I took her to the Blue Moon and that's how we got together.

JE: And you enjoyed dancing too?

HZ: Right. I loved to dance. I'm too old now. (Laughter.) Nobody wants to dance with a 93 year old man. (Laughter.)

JE: Well, I can't dance and nobody wants to dance with me either, so...

And then your marriage was blessed with children.

HZ: Yes, Stuart Zarrow and Judy Zarrow. Stuart is 65 years old and Judy is 61. They just built a library is Sperry and named it after her.

JE: And then I think you told me earlier you have seven grandchildren.

HZ: That's right.

JE: In your business, as you got your business going, Sooner Pipe & Supply, then you started buying other businesses, is that true?

HZ: No, we didn't really buy them. For instance, we were in the valve business called TK and there was an engineer that gave us the idea that we ought to try and make some valves to sell. The first place we built was near New Orleans and it was called TK Valve. And then we could sell valves to Shell Oil in the United States. But if we wanted to sell valves to all of the foreign countries, we'd have to build a plant in Scotland and be sure it had British and Scottish contents. It had to be that way. So we sold Shell their valves all over the world in different countries. We had one plant where we made the valves and another where we put them together. We were in Dunfermline, Scotland. We were there for 30 years. We sold our pipeline Big Heart to Koch, and we sold our valve company to Simmons in Houston.

JE: So then eventually you sold your last company in 1998, I guess it was?

HZ: Yes, it was Sooner. It's been 10 years now since we sold it. I was a consultant for them. They gave me a contract for five years. I did it for 10 years. Everybody thought I was the president, but I wasn't the president I was just the vice chairman they had because I represented them in the National Petroleum Council. They thought it was good business to have Sooner listed. There were 140-some members. I don't know how many Obama is going to have now this new man that they picked for head of the National Petroleum Council. But I probably will resign if they'll let me because I was supposed to watch and be sure that they weren't overcharging for the pipe because of the profits and everything.

JE: So you still serve?

HZ: I'm still on the Board of the National Petroleum Council. They haven't sent me a letter yet. They usually will send me a letter when they have a new man.

## Chapter 5 - 2:36

### U.S. Steel

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**John Erling:** What would you consider, in your business life, one of the best deals that you made?

**Henry Zarrow:** One of the best deals that I ever had was I shook hands with the President of U.S. Steel. We tried to figure out a contract between Sooner and them. We couldn't figure out how to do it, so we just shook hands. And that went on for 40 years. In fact I just got a letter from him. He's the chairman of Marathon too. That's where we got our seamless pipe, by me signing up and agreeing to take so much steel every year to deal with all the companies like Cimarron and Texaco and all of those companies, to be sure they had seamless pipe. By doing that, U.S. Steel was able to borrow money against those contracts to build a steel mill. We had a fellow that worked for us—he had retired from

Arthur Young. He showed U.S. Steel how to do that. He has since died. He had sugar diabetes.

JE: Do you remember some of the names of oilmen that you would call on for your used pipes?

HZ: Bill Skelly, and I would call on a purchasing agent.

JE: Did you meet Bill Skelly? Did you know him at all?

HZ: I knew him but not for selling anything to him. He had a purchasing agent, a lady. I would meet him at the API, but I would never call on him to sell pipe, I would always call on their purchasing department.

JE: But they knew that you knew them?

HZ: Well, they knew that I was selling to them because they didn't like that they couldn't cut me off. You know?

JE: Yeah.

HZ: Phillips Petroleum, I used to sell them pipe. In fact, we had pipe when pipe was scarce. Phillips would send a man down to ask if we were going to take care of them and I said, "Don't worry, we'll take care of you on pipe." Of course, they merged with Conoco. I knew the gentleman from Mobil. I remember he was going to get fired because he wanted \$5 million to buy out Superior Oil Company. They were going to fire him because he bought natural gas at 50 cents a 1,000 in the ground. But when Exxon bought Mobil, they said there can't be two presidents. So he said, "I'm going to retire." And I knew the president of Exxon, of course he's retired now too. I knew him at National Petroleum. But I still have contact with the fellow that ran Mobil.

## Chapter 6 - 1:38

### J. Paul Getty

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**John Erling:** J. Paul Getty, did you ever meet him?

**Henry Zarrow:** Yes I did. He helped me borrow \$300 from the First National Bank.

JE: Tell us that story.

HZ: Well, I had the store and I dealt with the First National Bank and I've dealt with them since I started when I was only about 13. My loan officer was a fellow named Roscoe Adams. He was a bachelor and he lived at the Tulsa Hotel. So I went up there at nighttime and I asked him. I said, "I'd like to borrow \$300." He said, "Well, you're too young son." I said, "Well, yes, I know it, but I'll sure try and I hope that I can pay you. I owe some bills for groceries for my store." He said, "I think you are just too young." J. Paul Getty was sitting next to him and he heard me talking. He said, "Why don't you loan the boy some

money and help him get started.” So Roscoe Adams went ahead and wrote me the check. J. Paul Getty owned Spartan Aircraft and he had an insurance company and he owned an oil company here. He had a purchasing agent named Johnson. When I finally got it to the steel business to sell pipe they were one of my customers. Well, he found out about it and set me a credit card for the Pierre Hotel in New York. They owned the hotel. I said I don’t have the money to stay there one night. I was kidding with the purchasing agent.

JE: Did you stay in touch with each other?

HZ: He moved over to London and all he did was just tell the fellow who was president of Skelly Oil, just take care of Henry.

## Chapter 7 - 1:03

### Hand Shake

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**John Erling:** You were born a businessperson because from the time you were a very small child you wanted to do business. What does it take to be a good businessperson?

**Henry Zarrow:** I give all the credit to my friends, not me. But they trusted me and gave me a chance. When you do not even have to shake hands to do business, that’s a miracle in itself. All the business I did and all of the years I was in business, I never had to have a contract with people. We used to sell oil companies pipe and they just trusted us. We had a company called AZ Terminal named after my wife. We did all of the threading and we did all of the furnishing of the pipe. And they didn’t want to send anybody to look at it because they didn’t want to spend 25 or 30 percent for nothing. We had the best customers there could be, Exxon and others.

## Chapter 8 - 2:40

### Will Rogers

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**John Erling:** Another name that was famous back in your era was Will Rogers. You were 15 or 16 years old when he died in that plane crash. Do you remember any of that?

**Henry Zarrow:** I remember being with him. He and his nephew and niece had a place at 124 East Independence. He didn’t like it, but his niece and nephew did. He wanted to buy them a better place. Well, my Dad was trying to buy a house and we visited there and of course I was with my Dad. The house was \$2,500. Will Rogers asked my dad, “Do you have the money to buy it?” And my dad said, “No.” So my Dad hung around another day or two and Will Rogers used to lie out on the lawn. Everybody in the neighborhood used

to be around there and you couldn't talk business to him because he was busy talking to all of these people. Well, one day he asked my dad, "Can you raise \$500?" My dad said, "Well, I think I can." He said, "Well, if you raise \$500 and can give my nephew and niece \$5,000 for a year in groceries from your grocery store, then we'll have a deal for this house. So my dad said, "It's a deal." My dad raised \$500 and we moved in there and we lived there at 124 East Independence for I don't know how long. Of course I was sad when he got killed, I never will get over it. He was so kind and thoughtful. And I can see him now, lying out on the grass chewing on a toothpick or something with all of those people around him. It was a poor neighborhood, you know. He didn't even make my dad sign a contract or anything. In those days, \$2,500 was a lot of money, but the house was in a poor neighborhood.

JE: So that's why he wanted his niece to move?

HZ: Yes. They moved out on South Columbia Street. He told me the block where he bought them the house.

JE: Did you have any more dealings or visits with him after that?

HZ: No.

JE: Do you remember where you were when you heard about Will Rogers' plane crash?

HZ: I don't remember now except I know it made me cry.

JE: Yes.

HZ: Yes it was a terrible thing. God didn't want him to live I guess.

JE: Well he was 55.

HZ: He was a baby. (Chuckle)

JE: A baby? Yeah. Coke, his niece, said that she felt he had lived such a full life by the time he was 55 that...they were trying to say, "Okay we understand," but...

## Chapter 9 - 6:08

### Philanthropy

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**John Erling:** Did you have a mentor or someone that you really looked up to?

**Henry Zarrow:** I've been on the Board of Saint Francis for 45 years. And of course W.K.

Warren, Sr. was my mentor there on that part, of charitable things. I am a Trustee with Bishop Slattery and Bill Jr. I dealt with his dad when his dad was alive. Sooner Pipe sold pipe to Warren Petroleum. That's how I met his dad. He was a mentor too. Two mentors in the same family, the father that's gone and the father that's alive now. He's trusted me for 1/3 of the hospital for 45 going on 50 years.

JE: As big of a businessperson as you were, you've now become known as a philanthropist,

you're very giving to the community. Where did that spirit come from in you?

HZ: The reason why I was there myself. I spent half a year at OU and that's why we have 90 to 100 scholarships every year for students to go to college. I think we are about at 1,500 now or close to it.

JE: Because money was an issue for you when you were in school?

HZ: Yes. The reason they let me go to OU was because I was in the ROTC.

JE: Then you are saying the spirit of giving goes back to, you know what it was like.

HZ: I used to work in a store on 1st Street and I would work from 6am until 10 o'clock at night, sacking potatoes for three dollars a day. So I knew what it was to work to get a little money. Of course, we are talking about some bad times too. I just feel like God's been good to me. He's let me live and I want to do everything I can to help children that want to go to college. We can do it and we have done it.

JE: None of them have disappointed you?

HZ: Sometimes the first semester they might not make their grades, but we give them another semester and usually they pull out of it. They have to graduate from a high school in Oklahoma, and they have to need the money. We've had good luck with all of them. In fact, we've had some of them work for us while they are not in school. We had one girl who said when she graduates from OU she's going to see that Russia and the United States make up and are good to each other. (Laughter) I get a kick out of her. In fact we are going to have a luncheon pretty soon of all the students that can come out at TU.

JE: And then you have given money to Tulsa Public Schools, you have that Million Dollar Challenge Grant?

HZ: I guess when I did that a lot of them thought about it and they all pitched in and helped.

JE: You formed the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation-

HZ: Right.

JE: And that's what's driving your giving. The Day Center for the Homeless must make you feel good.

HZ: Right. That's been very, very helpful. It's about 25,000 square feet and serves about 17,000 a month sometimes. And the people in Tulsa, I write them letters if it's over \$200. I used to be the head of it, but then my wife got sick and I had to spend more time with her. But I've still been writing letters and thanking people. People in Tulsa are good. They don't let you down.

JE: Then you've helped Neighbor for Neighbor?

HZ: Yes. They've got a lawyer. They've got a dentist. What they do now is they have a store and they give you the money and you can go in there and buy what you want. A lady named Mrs. Smith, she's been running it for eight or nine years and she's been wonderful. They had some space left over so they gave it to my daughter to open a place called Spay

Clinic. They have a vet there and if you have a dog needing to be neutered it costs \$35, and if you have a cat it's \$25. I said, "Well, what happens if they don't have any money?" She said, "We have a different book for that one." They took care of 6,200 dogs and cats last year.

JE: Wow.

HZ: Of course my daughter when she goes home, people throw dogs and cats away and she picks them up and takes them. She doesn't spend too much time there but she looks after it and she started it.

JE: You've helped the Tulsa and Oklahoma City Food Banks with special care?

HZ: I was out there with Walt (Helmerich). Did he tell you we were out there and they cooked a luncheon for us and showed us around, I'll tell you, it's amazing how beautiful it is and how much food they have. And they give about 480 children food for the weekend, so on Fridays they can take food home from the different schools they attend. It's unreal how beautiful and how clean it is and how good. So Walt and I had lunch there and it was very nice.

JE: When you were young and you said you were working all day for maybe three dollars and so forth, did you ever go hungry?

HZ: No.

JE: Because you worked?

HZ: Somehow I was able to make a little bit. You know hamburgers were only a dime and they were as big as I am. (Laughter.) When I was going to Longfellow, when I used to get a dime from my folks to get a hamburger for lunch

JE: Were cars interesting to you?

HZ: Somehow I was able to trade for a pickup. So I had a pickup truck.

JE: Walt Helmerich and you have had a friendship for some time now haven't you?

HZ: Yes. I don't really know how long.

JE: You have lunch with him every other week?

HZ: We go to different places to eat. We just had lunch at Wild Fork and Stone Horse. New Year's Eve we were at Polo Grill.

JE: That's a good friendship you've enjoyed over the last few years.

HZ: Yes. Whatever he says I believe. We don't need any signed contracts and all of that. It's just on our word.

JE: Well, both of you, your word can be trusted. There's no question about that.

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**Chapter 10 – 6:19****Advice**

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**John Erling:** Next week actually, you'll be 93 on February 12th.

**Henry Zarrow:** Right.

JE: Have you ever wondered and thought why was I allowed to live to be this age?

HZ: God let me live. Sometimes I didn't think I was going to make it, but He's pulled me through it. Of course I carry a Bible in my briefcase. The first thing I do in the morning when I get up is I say my prayers. I pray for all of my friends. And I thank God he let me live. I never thought I would make it to 93. I've been on planes when motors have gone out. I've been through everything in my life. When I used to work, our people didn't like to fly, so I had to do all of that. And selling pipe, I believed in one-on-one meetings. I always wanted to go visit the person so I could take to them. I did better that way. Just like I used to go to Shell and talk to them. They invited me to go to Saudi Arabia, but I wouldn't go. I was scared. I was afraid one of those guys might not like it. They knew we were Jewish.

JE: Was there any prejudice against you in your business because you were Jewish?

HZ: Well, if there was I don't know about it.

JE: You never felt it.

HZ: I never felt anti-Semitism. Maybe there is and I didn't know it. But I felt like I dealt with the biggest companies in the world, like Exxon and they take our word. They don't even have to send a man down to check the pipe that we were fixing for them.

JE: Well, you did business face-to-face with these people and so you earned their trust.

HZ: Right. There are no secrets in business, this business especially. I mean I can tell you what work the Supply Company did, and work they didn't do, and when U.S. Steel was in trouble, one of my competitors wouldn't help them. You know, they had to have 30,000 tons rolling at the new mill and we had orders for 25,000. So I called them and told them that we would take it to help them out.

JE: So then, is there a philosophy of life that you live by?

HZ: Well, first you have to believe in God. God's the Boss. And then, always have your name clean where you don't have to apologize to anybody. Do things that you feel are honorable. As my dad said, "That's all you have son."

JE: Yes. Well you have a great reputation.

HZ: Thank you.

JE: Your grandchildren, they face many, many years ahead and in what seems uncertain times. What would your words be to your grandchildren as they face an uncertain future?

HZ: Just tell the truth and believe in God. It may hurt you to tell the truth, but you've got

to tell it. If they would ask me, (that's what I would tell them) but they didn't ask me.  
(Chuckle.)

JE: Well, you're telling them now.

HZ: You can't keep very many secrets. Just like I know about your great reputation. Walt's telling me all the time I heard it on the radio. I've always enjoyed it. And when you say your name, that's gold to me.

JE: Well thank you.

HZ: I have respect for you.

JE: Coming from you, it's a high honor that's for sure. You said there were times during your life you had no idea you were going to live this long. Were there any cars or planes or accidents that you were in where you might have lost your life?

HZ: I was going to Nowata. I was going out to a field and a lease. I was in Bartlesville and I was going on this road to Nowata. This fellow was...it was in an intersection like this, (motions with hands) and I kept honking my horn and I thought he was waiting for me possibly. If I can remember he came out in front of me and I went out to the left. You can't see the culvert because the grass was grown over it. So I went through the door. I was laid up in the hospital there in Bartlesville for a few days. I came home and I had a couple of broken ribs but I lived through it and that's when they turned me down to go to the Army. It was about 60 years ago.

JE: When you see all that's going on now, do you wish you were 50 years old or that you had more time to live or do you wish you could go back and be younger?

HZ: Sometimes I think about it and then I say, well that's kind of foolish for me to think about it. I ought to be thankful to God that he let me live this long. Just think I could have been gone 50 years ago. I mean right there when I was in that car wreck. I was lying out on the door. It was cold. Somebody had stolen my overcoat. I should have died but God let me live.

JE: Yes.

HZ: And the doctor that looked after me up there was a horse doctor. He took care of horses up there at the hospital. Then I had Dr. Nelson here in Tulsa take care of me. In fact the house is still there where I lived. There at 15th and Lewis there's a place that sells office accessories. Right in the back of that there is a duplex. And I remember the day when Japan, December the 7th. I remember that date. My uncle was over there, and so was my wife's uncle.

JE: And that's where you were when you heard about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

HZ: Yes.

JE: You were in ROTC but they wouldn't let you in to the regular Army, is that true?

HZ: I had a double hernia and they wouldn't let me in. By the time I was going to have surgery

the war was over.

JE: So if you were to sum up your life what words would you use? What would you say?

HZ: I would say that I am the luckiest man I know of that God let me live this long. And I appreciate every day. I'm happy He let me live.

JE: Well, Happy Birthday.

HZ: Thank you.

JE: And thank you for this time that you spent with us.

HZ: Thank you John.

## **Chapter 11 - 0:29**

### **Conclusion**

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**John Erling:** You have just heard Henry Zarrow tell his story of a young boy born with a mind for business that grew into a giving heart.

The Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation will live beyond the lives of Anne & Henry to continue to impact the state of Oklahoma. Henry Zarrow is a tribute to honesty and humility while becoming known affectionately as "Mr. Henry." His story will be preserved on [VoicesofOklahoma.com](http://VoicesofOklahoma.com).